

BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY



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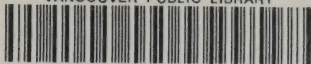
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“Drop I did,”—p. 18.

BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY

AND OTHER

STRANGE STORIES OF DELIVERANCE

BY

EDWARD WILLIAM THOMSON



TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS

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MONTREAL: C. W. COATES

HALIFAX: S. P. MURPHY

1897



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WESLEY BUILDINGS

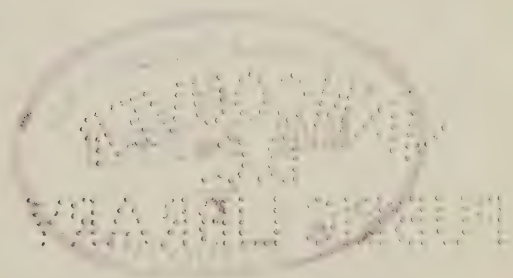
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

THESE stories by Mr. Thomson have most of them appeared in the "Youth's Companion" and other journals. Mr. Thomson, as is well known, is one of the editors of the "Youth's Companion" and his stories form a feature of that journal. The former volume from his pen, entitled "Old Man Savarin and Other Stories," has been received with marked favor, and these stories possess all the qualities of adventure, dash, and humor that characterized that. The illustrations, with the exception of the frontispiece, are reproductions of those used in the "Youth's Companion," by the courtesy of whose publishers they appear.

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BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY

TWENTY-SIX years ago, soon after France was forced to surrender Alsace and Lorraine to Germany, a good many people of these provinces came to America rather than swear allegiance to the Emperor William. Among them was an old soldier who told me the following story in broken English that I will not attempt to transcribe. He began with some vexation :

You are mistaken, I'm not a German. Because I speak German that does not make German my heart. It's all French. I'm an Alsatian. We Alsatians are more French than the French themselves, because from France we long had brotherhood and equality and freedom.

In the great war I was in the French army. Did I fight in many battles? No, I did not fight at all. But, for all that, I was in six battles under fire, and sometimes in worse danger than the men who fought. In the balloon corps I was twice wounded.

You think that was strange? You think there was no danger in the reconnaissance with balloons, eh? But if you saw how fast the Germans shelled our balloons as soon as they stopped in the air !

Stopped—how stopped? Why, stopped at the end of the rope. You don't suppose war balloons go loose, do you?

Well, if you saw how the Germans fired at them, and how they brought their long-range guns to bear on the ground where the end of the balloon rope was, then you would know whether there was danger for the men of the balloon corps.

I do not speak of the officers that went up in our balloons to view the enemy's lines. Any one may understand the risks they ran, when rifle balls and shells were screaming to pierce the balloon and bring its car tumbling down. No, I speak more of the risks we privates had from the German fire on our standing ground.

Could they see us? No; but they could see the balloon. They're not fools, the Germans. When they could see the balloon they could quickly calculate about where its rope touched the ground. Oh, that terrible German artillery! Skrei-i-i! I think I hear the shells shrieking again. Often we had to stay in one place for an hour, two, three hours, losing more by death and wounds than the same number of soldiers on outpost. But the most terrible of all was what happened to me at the end.

It was toward the latter part of August, ten days after the traitor Bazaine had cooped us up in the fortifications of Metz. The order came for my squad

to go out far, far toward the German lines, send up our balloon, and get a look at what the enemy were doing.

Bazaine—our army—still held a plenty of land—oh, a great wide country beyond the inner forts. In the field where we stopped there had been heavy fighting that morning. First our soldiers had been driven in a mile, then they had come back and recovered the ground. Recovered—yes, and covered it, I might well say. The field was thickly dotted with their corpses. It was strewn with dead and wounded horses, rifles, knapsacks, broken gun carriages—all the *débris* of war.

I could hear a dropping fire of musketry between the outposts, perhaps half a mile away in front of us. Still the field where we inflated our balloon was not much disturbed, except by live men burying dead men, by wounded horses shrieking, and sometimes by the march of our infantry into a narrow belt of woods that hid us and our balloon from the enemy.

There was a steady breeze blowing from us to the front. The sun was hot and the sky blue. I remember well how clear the sound of bells chiming in Metz behind us came across the acres and acres all strewn with wounded and dead.

For ten minutes after we had sent up the balloon there was no firing at it. There it floated, a thousand feet high. It was pressed toward the German lines by the breeze, which seemed stronger above. The balloon was not straight over our heads, you understand ;

the breeze took it maybe a hundred and fifty feet nearer the German lines than where we stood.

I stood near the cylinder, or drum, from which we had let out nearly all the rope that held the balloon from rising and blowing away. This rope slanted toward the Germans as it went up.

I had hold of this rope ; my two hands were above my head grasping the rope. I was resting like, when all of a sudden the German artillery opened fire.

They had not calculated the balloon's position very perfectly, but they got ours well. First five shells flew over the woods at the balloon. These were all timed to burst as they did, almost together. But none of their fragments hit the balloon ; they had burst too far behind and below it.

While I was watching these explosions a far bigger shell came curving over the wood as if flung from a mortar. It fairly struck the windlass drum on which the rope was wound, burst the same moment, and seemed to kill or wound every man of the squad except me.

Though I was not hit, I was half stunned by the concussion, and of course I should have been thrown to the ground if I had not held on by the rope. I did not know I was holding on, you understand. I was too much dazed to know what had happened or what I was doing. I knew I was alive, and that was about all, and I clung to the rope as if it was to save me from drowning.

When my full senses came back I felt that my feet were off the ground. I looked down. The earth was a hundred feet below me. Next moment it seemed nearer, and I saw why. The balloon, carried swiftly by the wind, had already lifted me over the wood. It was drifting rapidly toward the German lines.

I thought of dropping down among the tree tops, but while I was trying to make up my mind the balloon was rising. I was two hundred feet up from the ground. This all happened in no time, I might say.

Lifting my eyes to the balloon I caught a glimpse of it still as far in advance of me as it had been when I stood by the windlass. You might think my body would swing forward to a place straight under the balloon. No ; the balloon was traveling ahead and drawing me up and along at exactly its rate of speed.

Perhaps you don't know how easily a balloon goes up and on. No jerks—a steady, quiet flight—no resistance of the air to your movement forward, for you see the air goes with you ; it pushes you at exactly the speed it keeps. I remember wondering at the ease of the motion that bore me so swiftly away, and carried me higher and higher. My arms were not jerked ; it was as easy to hang on to the rope as if it had been in a barn.

In just a little bit of time, not half a minute, I suppose, I had passed over the wood, and there were then four hundred feet of air between my soles and the

ground. You see I had only the strength of my grip to save me from falling.

All this had occurred so quickly that I was more surprised than scared. Somehow, perhaps because I was lifted so easily, I had a sort of confidence that I should be as easily set down. But where? How long could I keep my hold? The balloon might rise above the clouds, with me dangling nearly a thousand feet below it, till I must drop from exhaustion.

I clung harder as I thought of how I should fall. I should turn headlong and shoot sloping, and turn again, tumbling limp like a figure stuffed with rags. The wildest fear—horror of the empty air—came over me. It's a wonder I didn't let go, for my reason seemed to leave me. But I hung on, and thought again.

I *must* have something on which my feet or legs could press. The sensation that they were weighting me was hideous. I lifted one leg as if to clutch it around something firm. You know how a man will do that when he is holding on by his hands and beginning to lose his grip. It is an unconscious movement. Well, my leg touched the trailing rope, the rope which passed down in front of my body and which followed slanting behind me, just as the rope above slanted up from me to the balloon.

At touch of the rope I instinctively threw forward my legs, but failed to hold the rope between them. With that a great shout came up from a brigade of our

infantry over which I was passing. The soldiers, I suppose, had not quite understood the horror of my situation till they saw the movements of my legs.

With the sense of being watched by thousands a certain new strength came. I thrust forward my left leg till I felt the rope inside the thigh, then I clutched with the right leg and held the rope. Then I kicked my right foot around and got a better hold. This gave a good deal of relief to my hands. Then I looked down.

Directly beneath me were the spiked helmets of a German infantry regiment. Twirling as I was with the rotary motion which a balloon always has in free flight, and which was imparted to the slanting rope, I lost sight of the German array in an instant. A field of yellow stubble came into my vision, then a wood, then a confused panorama of cavalry, infantry, and artillery. All were gazing upward.

Fifty thousand enemies looked steadily at me. They had stopped in their tracks with wonder. Not a shout, not a gun was heard for what seemed an immense time, and must really have been about half a minute. Swallows flew around or past me with twit, twit, twit, as if exulting to show their speed against that of the wind that quietly swept me on.

Rifle-firing between the outposts must have ceased as I went dangling over their ground, for shooting seemed to break out afresh and distant as I looked down into the faces of a squadron of Uhlans.

You think this all took a long time. No, I passed on like a bird, and things beneath streamed away behind me as if pushed with irresistible speed toward Metz. I remember well having a fancy that the Germans were being poured against the city.

The Uhlans pointed out in amazement at me with their lances. One must have raised his carbine to fire at me, for I distinctly heard a loud voice cry :

“No ! Do not shoot. We will follow and capture the balloon and the officers in it. If you kill the man he will fall. Then his weight will relieve the balloon and up it will go again.”

“Up it will go again.” Again ! It was well for me that I understood German. The balloon must then be falling. I had forgotten that. Of course it was falling, and quickly too. Hope and strength revived in me. I understood better than the Uhlans what was happening.

My officers, away up above, were releasing gas. They were risking capture to save me. They were trying to put me so near the ground that I could drop safely. Looking up I saw faintly for an instant their white faces gazing down and back at mine. They waved their shakos to me.

They were indeed trying to save the poor private soldier ! God bless them for brave men and honest officers ! I resolved to drop when within thirty feet of the ground, and thus save them.

You understand that not more than three or four minutes could have elapsed since the great shell had cut loose the balloon. I afterward found out that my flight had been at the rate of nearly thirty miles an hour. I had been carried more than two miles when I found the rope slowly tearing through my grasp.

Looking down I saw the ground about two hundred feet below. My strength was ebbing fast.

The balloon as it descended must have reached a breeze of little speed, for the Uhlans, whom I had heard and sometimes seen clattering farther and farther behind, were again galloping beneath me. Every man was looking upward. All were taking ditches and hedges in their stride. With the excitement of the chase they began to yell. Their leader silenced them with an angry command.

They now carried their lances pointing straight up by their knees, every butt in its socket. I had the thought that I must, when I fell, be impaled on those glittering points.

With straining to grasp the rope more tightly between my knees they had begun to tremble. My whole body was racked by pain ; my breath came short ; the sweat poured out of me, though I was now deadly cold. My distress was becoming unendurable and my senses, I knew, must soon depart. Every second the rope slowly passed through my hot and bleeding hands.

I looked down once more. The nearer I came to the earth the more whirled the panorama of woods, soldiers, *châteaux*, cabins, and fields. I was incessantly turning more and more giddy. I closed my eyes. I felt I might at any moment drop.

My grasp was so feeble that the rope tore and burned with its quickened slipping. I attempted to seize it with my teeth, and failed. Expressions of pity came from the galloping Uhlans.

"Poor man!" said their leader. "Poor fellow. Big Fritz, try and put your lance in the loop. Then gallop a little faster and you may help him down."

The loop! I had forgotten the loop. But the rope had been fastened around the drum by a long loop.

"The loop, eh!" thought I. "If the loop is near the lances I must be near the ground. If they get hold of the loop they will haul down the balloon and capture my two lieutenants. I must drop."

Drop I did, right upon the back of one of the Uhlans! The shock brought him and his horse both under me to the ground. The man was badly hurt, but I'm glad he didn't die, for he saved my life, though not as he meant to. I remember being clutched by hands and lifted. I remember an angry shout of "It's gone up!" The balloon, freed from my weight, had risen instantly, carrying the loop beyond my captors' reach.

Then I must have lost my senses.

When I came to there were only two Uhlans with me. Both were looking intently upward and toward where there was a sound of musketry not far away. The Uhlans were shooting vainly at the vanishing balloon. My lieutenants were waving their signals flags in derision.

What became of the balloon and my officers I do not know to this day. The Germans kept me prisoner till the end of the war, and I came away to America as soon as I knew Alsace was no longer part of dear France.

ORDEAL OF OLIVER JAMES

MY young friend, Oliver James, put his canoe into the water below Chestnut Street, Boston, about eleven o'clock on the morning of the thirteenth of July. The hour is fixed by the janitor of the Kashigawigamog Boat Club, who remembers that Mr. James, while selecting his paddle, remarked that the tide seemed half in.

So hot was the day that the janitor advised Oliver to wait for a breeze. But the young man said his blood seemed fevered by heat, that the sultry weather had kept him awake nearly all the previous night, that he had tried vainly to find coolness under the trees of the Common, that his head rang with the clatter on granite blocks and the clang of the electric cars, and that nothing would relieve him so well as the perspiration of rapid exercise. The janitor thinks that perhaps Oliver had already been slightly sunstruck.

The sun, as he started, glared from an unclouded sky. From the various tall chimneys of Boston, Cambridge, and Charlestown, smoke rose as straight up as on a windless winter morning. Under the least breeze the river affords coolness to oarsmen, but on that still forenoon the scorch of the sun was unmitigated.

"I suppose my shins and arms will peel again," Oliver called back to the janitor.

They and his neck and shoulders were naked, for he was paddling in "trunks." The bare parts were tanned dark brown, for he was used to going out in that scant costume.

"I guess you're safe from sunburn anyhow, sir," said



the janitor, and hastened indoors to escape the glare. He reflected, as he watched Oliver paddling up river, that the young man was not likely to gain relief by perspiring freely, for the furnace-like glow between water and sky "would dry up the sweat faster than it came."

No doubt Oliver supposed that his fine muscular condition would bring him through with impunity, but it is probable that he was a little too "fine," or overtrained. After he had passed under the Harvard Bridge, on the Cambridge side of the central draw, he was lost to the

janitor's sight. For the next particulars I have consulted one of the men of the dredge working above the bridge near the Cambridge embankment.

This man noticed Oliver coming alongside the dredge, as if he were seeking shade, which he could not find because the sun was too high.

"It's frightfully hot," said Oliver.

"Terrible," said the dredge hand.

"I feel about done up."

"Should reckon you would. Better come in under the roof here."

"No, the roar of the machinery would drive me wild. Have you any cold water aboard?"

The man brought out a big dipperful. Oliver wetted his head and neck, drank, said he felt better, and paddled off toward the Crescent Club's boathouse. He had complained of "burning all over" and wished he had worn something affording more shade than his little flannel rowing cap gave.

About half-way across, and while slanting up river, Oliver was met by Jacob Foxglove, the professional oarsman, an Englishman, rowing in his shell. Foxglove tells this story :

"The young un looked kind of done up, so I stops and says I, 'Wot's the row, matey?'"

"'Nothing much,' says he. 'I'm a bit faintish, that's all.'"

"'Want help?' says I."

“ ‘No ; quiet’s all I want. It’s the roaring of the city that’s worst,’ says he.

“ ‘Roaring of sunstroke,’ says I.

“ ‘Sunstroke !’ says he, kind of startled. ‘Oh, I guess not. But I’ll go ashore at the Crescent Club house.’

“ ‘It’s shut ; there ain’t nobody there,’ says I.

“ ‘Well, I’ll draw my canoe out on their platform and sit down in the shade of their house,’ says the poor young fellow.

“ ‘For all he was sort of gasping like a bird in the heat, he looked so fit that I didn’t think he was in a bad way. So I pulls off, for you may lay to it that I wanted to get my own hide out of the sun.’”

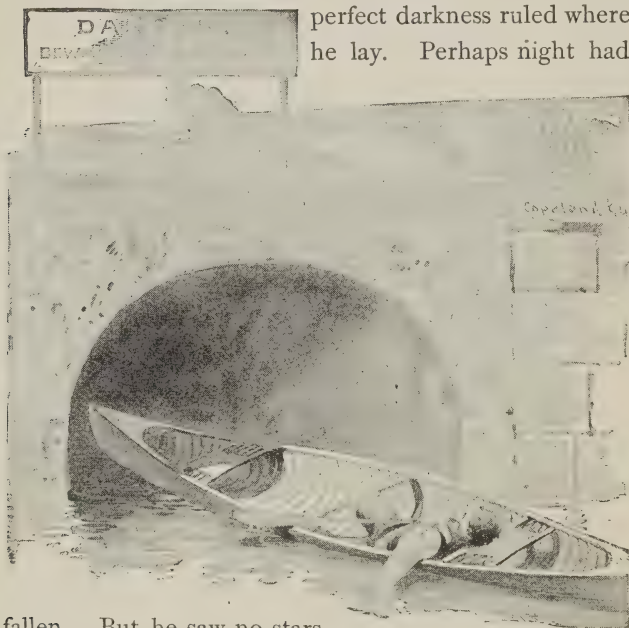
Foxglove also says that he kept his eye on Oliver till he was almost ashore in a place where sky and river seemed “dancing together in heat haze.” The Englishman saw no one at the Crescent Club boathouse, and he thinks all the city laborers, then usually working near there, had struck on account of the heat.

Certainly Oliver must have been close to the embankment when he fell back in the canoe. He had been sitting near the middle on two small cushions which remained under him as he fell. The back of his head struck against the first thwart in front of the stern, his neck bent limply, and his head fell sharply to the floor.

When Oliver regained consciousness he supposed he had been struck blind, which seemed the more probable

because everything had been indistinct before he fainted, and the last he remembered was that blackness seemed suddenly to surround him. If he was not blind then

perfect darkness ruled where he lay. Perhaps night had



fallen. But he saw no stars.

Oliver winked both eyes repeatedly. They were in no pain, though he had a splitting headache, and felt very ill. He lay wondering what had happened.

A draught of cool air was about him ; he could hear the water rippling under the canoe, which swashed slightly as he moved. It also grided curiously, and he judged that it was not moving with the current.

His coat, with matches and a watch in the pockets, lay beneath his shoulders. To reach the matches he found he must rise and get the coat clear. As he sat up he felt more distinctly the cool draught. Then his head struck with a little force against a damp ceiling, and he quivered with horror as he instantly surmised what must have occurred during his faint.

When he lighted a match, which was not blown out till he had glanced around, he saw that he had indeed drifted, while in a faint, into that round tunnel which opens on the Charles. A hundred times he had seen over it the big board placard : DANGER ! BEWARE OF CONDUIT.

A hundred times he had shivered at the thought of what would happen to any one exploring the conduit if caught by the rising tide.

This conduit is not a sewer, but was built to discharge the occasional overflow of heavy rains from a distant reservoir. Oliver was in no danger of suffocation by foul air. But he did not doubt that he was doomed to die there.

The ceiling of the conduit is a few inches below the surface of the Charles at high tide. And already the water was so high that Oliver had not room to sit up straight in his canoe.

The sharp bow had run against one side of the timbered tunnel and been held there, Oliver could not see by what. The stern had swung around and was pressed against the other side of the arch.

So the canoe had been held diagonally ; for how long or short a time Oliver could not guess. As he tried to sit up the canoe shook, and went free, and drifted with the current.

Though Oliver had to sit stooped, he could use his paddle, and did so for a few seconds before it came into his heat-stupefied brain that he was paddling with the insetting tide and therefore away from the Charles.

With a strong effort of will he collected his thoughts. Perhaps he might as well try to get out one way as the other. So he thought, for he was not aware that the tunnel was miles long. He supposed that the inner end of it was in the Back Bay fens, not a quarter of a mile away.

However, as he did not know whether the conduit's inner end was wholly submerged or not, his best chance seemed to be in paddling for the Charles. Therefore he faced around and tried to stem the current.

It was difficult work for a sick man. He had to stoop to save his head. He could not lift his paddle high enough to clear the water, but moved it forward, submerged, for each stroke. Every moment the little arc of air overhead was lessening with the rising tide.

Oliver, perhaps because of the increasing pain of stooping, thought the flood came in with astonishing speed. The gradual lifting of the canoe forced his head against the ceiling, and the knuckles of his upper hand scraped against the boards, which seemed over-

grown with some short weed and roughened by barnacles.

After some minutes he found no more room for strokes that would move her against the current. Then he clutched desperately at the weeds and barnacles overhead, trying to check her drift backward.

To give up and be drowned unresistingly never entered the mind of this American boy. Sick, fevered, weak, racked with pain, he would yet fight to the end.

Hundreds of people were plainly within a few yards of him, for he could hear the frequent rumble of street-cars, and occasionally the more distant passage of Boston and Albany railway trains. Beacon Street, he supposed, was directly above his horrible prison.

As Oliver vainly clutched at the conduit's lining, it occurred to him that he might paddle with his hands; but when he tried this he found the canoe drifting quickly backward. Then he lay down on his back and thrust his knuckles upward against the ceiling.

With this the pain of stooping went out of his shoulders and his desire to struggle became more intense. His knuckles slipped slowly along, scraped often and sorely by the barnacles. Soon he comprehended that he should have lain with his head toward the Charles, for he could not get any hold with the backs of his fingers.

With difficulty he shifted about, touched the roof with his palms, and instantly perceived that he could

now thrust the canoe forward. He placed one palm against the ceiling, pushed, reached forward the other palm, pushed again, and so went slowly against the current.

Lying with ears close to the floor of the canoe, Oliver heard the gurgle so clearly that he supposed his speed considerable till he fell to estimating it. His reach was about two feet, and each push took about two seconds.

But the narrowing and lowering arch often stopped the wobbling bow. At such times he swayed it back to the center by pressing both hands upward till the prow went clear. Considering all things, he reckoned he was gaining about ten yards a minute.

The tide, rising at the rate of twenty inches an hour, would set the canoe's bow and stem hard against the ceiling within twenty minutes. Then he must resign himself. But in twenty minutes he might gain two hundred yards !

Though Oliver could see no light whatever, he calculated that the Charles could not be two hundred yards distant. The Beacon Street cars, which he could now hear but faintly, ran within three hundred yards of the Crescent Club boathouse. If he had gained one hundred yards already, he conceived he might reach the river in the few minutes remaining.

The thought of being drowned in that slimy hole in the dark was horrible. To sink and lie in the mud at

the bottom—perhaps not to float out with the tide till thrust up at last against the ceiling in high water !

To his sick fancy this fear gave death a new terror. He worked desperately, with a sense of growing weakness.

When the water was so high that the front end of the canoe steadily scraped on the ceiling, Oliver wiggled forward to weight down the prow. He went too far, and the aft end began to scrape. Then he shifted back till both ends were barely free, and pushed with all his might.

One, five, ten pushes—was the canoe about to stop? Yes—it was now caught at both ends ! He screamed with the anguish of defeat and doom.

How could one silently meet death coming in such wise? There he was, prisoned, in absolute darkness, waiting for the tide to press up over the edges and drown him like a rat in a hole.

Again he began struggling. He pushed against the ceiling in order to force the canoe deeper, and so gain room for thrusting it onward. Thus he had made a little progress when it became clear that the canoe would soon upset.

Between pushes, when it rose, it tilted. The high bow and stern were acting as levers to topple it over.

Oliver put his right hand over the side into the running water ; it was within two inches of coming over that side. He lifted his head and twisted it around in

hope to see light from the entrance. Not a gleam ! With his motion the canoe lurched and the water poured over.

Oliver vainly tried to right his craft. Too late ! The next moment he rolled over into the current.

Deliciously refreshing, the tide had run in from the sea. Down went Oliver ; up he came, under the canoe. But already the immersion had relieved him from the stupidity and headache of partial sunstroke. On touching the thwarts he knew what to do, dived against the current, and rose with swimming room above his head.

“ I’ve a chance yet. I can swim ! But how far have I to go ? ” thought Oliver, and swam steadily on in the dark.

At short intervals his hands touched the walls, for the arc was now barely wide enough to permit swimming. Before two minutes had passed he found his hair touching the ceiling. Then he swam as deep as he could, keeping his chin in water.

“ Surely,” thought he, “ I can reach the Charles in five minutes.” But three minutes had not gone when the back of his head was once more up against the weeds and shells of the ceiling.

Now he fancied he saw faint light far ahead. But it had become impossible for him to keep his mouth above water. With a few more strokes his nose was pressed under.

Oliver dived, swam under water, and came up with a sense that all was over. He could not clear his nose, nor dive again without taking breath. He kicked and plunged under the surface in despair, thinking, "My death-throes have begun!"

All over? No—he turned on his back, got his mouth and nose among the weeds and caught breath. Then he swam on his back with huge endeavor. He would not be drowned, he vowed, while an inch of air remained into which he might put his nose. It slipped through the weeds and scraped along the little shells. The terrible and brave struggle was almost finished.

If he should take in water when gasping for air he must be choked. Then he would thrash around wildly for a few moments, sink limp, and drift in along the bottom—how far?

Oliver could see no light, for the entrance, if near, was behind him. But he knew he had turned a corner in the tunnel and he knew that corner was not far from the Charles. One more breath—then he turned over on his front and dived for the last time.

Dived! He went down to the bottom and crawled there. He crawled till he could crawl no more, and then he would not rise. Straight on he swam as he felt himself ascending.

When the back of his desperate young head came up against the ceiling he still swam. He swam so well, indeed, that he swam straight out of the conduit and

came bursting and choking up outside the embankment.

Most of this information I had from Oliver himself, that afternoon, who then looked as well as any young athlete can who has his nose covered with sticking plaster.

“How good it was,” said he, “to come up under the same old hot, glorious sun, and hear the thundering of the dredges, and the clatter and clang of the cars, and know that I was alive and not dead ! I could hardly believe it.

“What did I do ? Why, I swam to the Crescent platform, walked down the river to our boathouse, and astonished the janitor with my scraped nose and no canoe. I didn’t tell him my story for he wouldn’t have believed it. I can hardly believe it myself. Indeed,” said the young fellow, very solemnly, “what saved me was just the mercy of God.”

Next day I met him on Tremont Street.

“I’ve got my canoe and paddles,” said he ; “they floated out at low tide. All I’ve lost is a coat and a valuable nickel-plated watch which any fellow can have who chooses to go into that hole after them.”

SENATOR JIM'S FIRST POTLATCH

JIM was an ugly baby—even his mother admitted it—and that too in a home where babies were annuals and uncommonly pretty. He was an ugly boy, and is now an ugly man. One who sees him for the first time thinks, “How very ugly !” and this impression is renewed at each meeting.

Yet Jim, from his early youth, was admired by all who knew him well, and the admiration gradually extended to many who never saw him, till now the people of more than one Canadian province are ready to cheer the mere mention of Senator Jim Thatcher's name. Hundreds of people have vainly tried to explain why they admired Jim's looks, but none ever succeeded better than the clever old lady who said :

“Yes, he's ugly ; but he looks great and friendly.”

Now this “great and friendly” look of Senator Jim belonged to Jim the small boy, and was, I believe, a consequence of his early understanding that he was ugly. He must have recognized this when he was two or three years old, for his brothers and sisters began as early as that to address him quite affectionately as “You ugly boy.”

This vexed Jim in no degree. He accepted his snub nose and wide mouth as cheerfully as his lack of a singing voice ; it was not a loss to him, but something taken from the enjoyment of his friends, something for which he felt in honor bound to give compensation.

"It's not very nice for you to have such an ugly boy, mother," said Jim, at an early age ; "but it's very nice for me to belong to such a handsome family. Of course I'm going to do plenty of things to make it up to you."

In this humor he worked with great versatility. By diligent practice he made himself an excellent elocutionist, because he couldn't learn to sing, and it would be a shame for him to contribute nothing to the family entertainments always going on in this cheerful household. "I mean to be a satisfactory son to you, father," was Jim's reason for taking a basketful of school prizes. In running, swimming, rowing, jumping, riding, cricket, lacrosse, football, and what not, Jim was well to the fore by sheer dint of exertion, for he did not begin with an extraordinarily good physique.

It must not be inferred that he was altogether a paragon. It was Jim who, practising rifle shooting at fifteen years old, shot off cleanly the curly tails of sundry little pigs, and defended the proceeding on the ground that "every fellow should try to do something original." But that was long after his famous potlatch.

Jim's good-humored struggle for name and fame

made him a living energy, and it was this, and the big heart of the boy, that shone like a flame in his face and drew admiration from people who wondered to find themselves giving it. Ugly Jim looked great and friendly. That was, indeed, the explanation.

He must have been about eleven years old when public spirit began to stir in him and manifested itself in that open-handed proceeding with which his popularity began. Up to that time his desire to contribute to the enjoyment of his fellow-creatures had not been active beyond the circles of his home and school, though it is true that he had invented the "potlatch" for himself before this time.

You know, I presume, that the potlatch is an institution among the Indian tribes of Puget Sound. The savage who aspires to high social standing saves up blankets and other desirable portables till he has a great store. Then he invites his tribe to a feast and gives away the accumulation. This potlatch, by means of which the Indians ambitiously beggar themselves, doubtless originated with some ancient chief who was moved by the craving for appreciation which has always marked our Jim.

Jim's preliminary potlatches—we called them treats—were small affairs. At home and at school it became well understood that the ugly boy, when he came into the possession of a cent, did not squander it, like other fellows, on candy or marbles for himself, but added it

to previously saved coin till he owned at least a dime, which he then expended in what his father used to call a "blow-out" for the whole company. Jim sternly gave away his goodies to the last morsel, and would never have participated in his own feasts had not the more thoughtful of his companions insisted on his partaking of their portions.

It was a touching comedy to see Jim nobly waving away the proffered sweets, yet relaxing now and then from his grandeur to take a bite from the sugar stick of some one, commonly a little girl, who looked like crying at his successive refusals. Happily the potlatches of his maturity have not left Jim destitute, for the bread he casts on the waters usually comes back buttered.

It was a warm day in early September when Jim's Uncle Daniel, a great stump-speaker, billed for a political meeting in our village, arrived at Jim's father's house. There the boys and girls looked forward with peculiar interest to his coming, for he had never failed to begin a visit by presenting each of the children with a dollar bill. Jim, on this occasion, stored away his money according to his habit. Even so large a sum could not be laid out on a treat till it was hoarded awhile and enlarged by sundry additions.

While his brothers and sisters dispersed to spend the afternoon in extravagant pleasures, Jim, by way of delicate compliment to his Uncle Daniel, appeared at

the public meeting. Posted in the fore-front, he had the luck to catch his uncle's eye. That eminent orator was fleshy and drougthy ; the day was hot ; he was beginning to thirst ; his time for speaking was at hand ; and a pitcher of water for the speaker had been forgotten.

"Jimmy, come here, my boy," said Uncle Daniel, leaning over the front of the platform.

Jim went forward coolly, probably expecting to be called up higher, for he had a good opinion of the political importance of a boy whose uncle had been billed for ten days past as "The celebrated liberal orator, the Honorable Daniel Thatcher," in letters a foot long on placards posted on every board fence and shed in our town.

"Jimmy," said his uncle, "go over to that refreshment stand and get me two bottles of pop and a tumbler." He handed the ugly boy a fresh, crisp, ten-dollar bill.

When Jim had elbowed his way back to the platform, Uncle Daniel's speech was begun, but the thirst was troubling him, and he saw his small messenger promptly. Stooping for the drinkables, he said, "Good boy, Jimmy ! Keep that for a frolic," and, thrusting a five-dollar bill upon his nephew, he pushed the rest of the change into his own capacious pocket.

"Now," cried Uncle Daniel, waving the bottles with the comic air that made him such a favorite, "now I

can take a pop at Sir John's government." Amid the roar of laughter at this eminent joke Jim, forgetting his dignity in excitement, pushed his way back through the crowd.

"Hurrah!" he called to the boys on the outskirts. "My uncle has given me a fiver!" Then waving the bill, he ran home as fast as his legs would carry him, followed by half the boys of our town.

"Tunder and blazes, fellers!" roared Pud Latimer, who, though far removed from Jim's social circle, had often heard of Jim's potlatches. "Tunder and blazes, what'll he do with it?"

This problem occupied Jim himself all the rest of the afternoon. A weight was on his mind, and he locked himself up in his own room till tea time to ponder it thoroughly. Then his great resolve had taken shape. He had now six dollars and eight cents, a sum beyond his wildest dreams, and a grand feed for the whole youthful population was in his mind's eye.

At tea he was, though not talkative, greater and more friendly than on any other occasion in his whole life. All the family were under the magnetism of his silent and controlled emotion. It was plain that he was thinking of mighty affairs, and it would have been almost irreverence to intrude questions upon his meditation.

"Edward," he said to his elder brother, as they rose from the meal, "will you be so kind as to come down town with me?"

“Certainly, James.” Usually they called each other Ned and Jim, but the shadow of great events enforced formality. “Certainly, James, I’ll do anything you like.”

Ned was Jim’s senior by five years, but the sense of the ugly boy’s greatness and wealth overtopped pride of age, and put all Edward’s affability at his brother’s disposal. They soon entered the little shop under the sign, “Mary Meeks, Baker and Confectioner.”

“Miss Meeks, can you deliver me six dollars and eight cents’ worth of molasses candy by three o’clock to-morrow afternoon?” asked Jim with dignity.

“Six dollars and eight cents’ worth of molasses candy!” Miss Meeks almost shrieked.

“That is my order,” replied Jim composedly. “If you think you can’t fill it why, then——”

“But it’s such a tur’ble lot!” she interrupted. “Whatever are you going to do with all that taffy?”

“Well, I do not wish to seem rude, Miss Meeks, but I prefer to say nothing about that this evening.” Jim’s deliberation in speaking was very impressive—he had wisely cultivated that manner.

“But, Mr. Edward,” she turned to the elder brother, “it’s such a monstrous lot! We don’t sell as much molasses candy as that in six months. Lemme see—why, it’s near forty pounds; for of course I’d make the price wholesale. Goodness’ sakes! Forty pounds of taffy!”

"Oh, I have nothing to do with it. My brother knows his own business. He's going to pay for it himself, you know," said Edward. "But perhaps you can't make so much by to-morrow?"

"I must have it to-morrow, for to-morrow is Saturday," said Jim.

"Oh, well, we'll make it all right enough, but I guess it'll keep us all pulling from now out. Oh, yes, we can make it, we'll be glad to make it."

"Then please do so, Miss Meeks, and deliver it at our gate not later than three o'clock," said Jim, with grave politeness, replacing in his pocket the bills he had been carelessly handling. He had already changed the five for ones. The sum felt larger in this shape.

No one who was not in or about Colonel Thatcher's front yard next day can imagine how great and friendly Jim was.

"Pud Latimer," said he, climbing on top of the picket fence and smiling amiably at the assembly, "are you sure that all your friends are here? Haven't you forgotten any boys or girls that you know?"

"Naw, I hain't forgot none of 'em. They's all here, barrin' the widow Murphy's three childer that's sick, and Jan Olsen's one that's bedrid, and there's six more what couldn't come because they had to work."

Jim, on the morning of that eventful day, had commissioned Pud to drum up all his acquaintances. Not

that there was need, for the news that Jimmy Thatcher was going to treat the village had spread far and wide.

"Lay aside half a tin for the absent and the sick," said Jim. "I'll carry it to them myself after this meeting. Now, Edward, let us have the pleasure of handing the taffy out to our friends."

In the space between every second pair of pickets appeared the nose and eyes of a boy or girl. Jim's schoolmates were gathered outside, none but the children of the Thatcher family being admitted to the labors of distribution. Jim had thought of giving exclusive places on the lawn to our school. "But we must be true to the great principles of liberalism," he finally remarked. It was a phrase caught from his Uncle Daniel's speech of the day before.

The taffy, duly broken into fragments, was piled on the large square tin platters on which it had arrived, and sheltered from the sun in the summer-house nearest the fence.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Jim, again utilizing his uncle's speech, "it is with great pride and pleasure that I appear before you. I have long looked forward with eagerness to this occasion, and will always remember this as the happiest moment of my life. We will now ask you to keep standing just as you are till those nearest the fence are served with some of our excellent Miss Meeks' excellent taffy—a gifted lady who does credit to our prosperous and energetic community."

This was a sudden reminiscence of the "Bugle's" reading notice which accompanied Miss Meeks' latest advertisement. "Edward, Lucy, Richard, Elvira, Peter, George, Samuel," here Jim turned to his brothers and sisters, "I will now ask you to be good enough to assist me in entertaining our young friends."

They were mostly years older than Jim, but none of them laughed; his demeanor was too much that of a great functionary.

"The order of proceedings that I will beg you to observe is this," said Jim, balancing himself steadily on top of the fence and crossing the forefingers of his two hands as he slowly uttered the words. "Let every lady and gentleman be true to themselves and their higher nature, and when they receive their taffy let them retire out to the other side of the street and give other ladies and gentlemen a chance at the confectionery."

At this Colonel Thatcher, who with his wife had been watching their ugly boy's proceedings through the shutter of the nearest window, burst into a roar of laughter which was suddenly smothered, for Mrs. Thatcher placed her hand over the colonel's mouth.

"Edwin," she exclaimed, "for goodness' sake don't let James hear you laughing at him! He'd be so offended!"

Jim's greatness had long before impressed his mother, and she stood in a delighted awe of him from that

memorable day. Fortunately he was too near the fence to have heard more than his father's short laugh. At that the ugly boy half turned to the window, bowing with a grand sweep of his hat.

"My parents," said he, "ladies and gentlemen, are pleased to witness our little festivity." How he mustered up the large words and the experienced air that he exhibited that day has always puzzled me, but he certainly did rise magnificently to the occasion.

After that we distributed the taffy. The more or less dirty hands grabbed it eagerly through the pickets, but there was little tumult or variation from the order of proceedings.

Jim gravely directed his assistants. "It's Abe Cornick's turn now, Edward." "Now help Jenny Sinclair, my dear Elvira." "A little more to Peter Wilkins, please." Everything went on with solemnity. The boy had imposed his authority on the entire assembly, and Uncle Daniel, when he heard of the affair, prophesied that Jim would make an excellent chairman.

After all had been served, even to the third helping, Jim, while the outsiders licked their fingers and watched the Thatcher children through the pickets, apportioned the small remnant of the taffy to his assistants, stoically refusing to taste of it himself. This supernatural unselfishness was too much for Pud Latimer.

"Look a here!" he protested. "This ain't no

fair shake. This here taffy's taffy from Taffyville ! Say ! You ain't goin' to give every scrap away, Jim Thatcher?"

Jim smiled benevolently but with firm refusal. It was hard, for he had a sweet tooth, but his refusal stood till Pud broke into a howl as the Thatcher children consumed the last morsels.

"Look here ! Say ! I've had five helpin's—take some of this here !" Pud extracted from his trousers pocket a mass wrapped in newspaper, and thrust it through the pickets.

At that Jim relaxed. "If it's any pleasure to you, Pud," said he, and calmly took one bite from the portion of the raggedest boy of possible boys. "Thank you, very much, Pud," said he, with his mouth full, bowing and retiring.

It was too sublime, and the crowd felt it. "Hooray for Jim Thatcher !" they yelled. "Hooray ! hooray ! hooray !" and went cheering down the street to vaunt our ugly boy.

"That potlatch," Senator Jim says himself, "was the beginning of my popularity. It seems to me I was always appreciated and always called Mr. Jim after that. And it's the only time I ever gave taffy to the multitude—I hope."

IN FULL FLOOD

FRANK BURGESS, when I knew him first, was a handsome, wholesome, alert young civil engineer, loved by all who knew him. Was any man in the office sick or wanting a holiday, Frank did the absentee's work cheerfully. He would mend any child's toy on demand, and carry any workwoman's bundle, and give his last quarter to relieve distress.

Whether in work or play he was glad. Many men, when in unusually good spirits, are bores, but Frank never jarred on one's nerves. I have seen him on keen winter days, make a joy of every breath exhaled, watching each little white cloud from his lips as though it were a novel toy.

And well I remember how, waked by exulting songsters, I rose once to catch all the dim enchantments of a summer dawn, and found Frank, high up in an oak, whistling the merriest note of the morning.

He changed sadly in after years. I do not know what was at the root of that change, for I had left Brandleton before it occurred. Some said that a taste for liquor had overmastered him. Others said that he was never the same man after his elder brother, Lewis,

began to court Mary Bradshaw. Lewis did not seem to know that Frank had seemed fond of Mary, and Frank ceasing his wooing when the intentions of his brother became town talk. Mary married the elder brother within a year. After that Frank was often flushed with drink, and his gayety took a hollow ring.

Now Lewis Burgess was a good man, pious, decorous, and stern. So it came about that he often took Frank to task about his new ways, and in the end there was a complete rupture between the brothers, who had loved each other the more dearly because they had no other relatives in that countryside.

One who overheard the final quarrel, if quarrel it could be called, told me that Lewis began by expostulation.

"Can you not battle with the craving, Frank?" said he. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

"It's not a craving, Lewis," said the younger.

"How then?"

"It gives me a light heart again sometimes, I think," said Frank.

"But it gives me a heavy one," answered the other sadly; "and it will destroy you soon. Leave the accursed thing! I am determined that you shall. You must come and live with me."

"Impossible," exclaimed Frank.

"Why? There is plenty of room in our house, and I am sure Mary would be delighted. Now I think of it,

you have never been to see us but once since we married."

"I never shall go again," answered Frank in a tone that Lewis mistook for an offensive one. With that he became angry, thinking his brother was bent on a quarrel, and said severe things, to which the young fellow made no answer.

"I invite you once more," spoke the grave man, in conclusion, "to become a member of my household, where Christian influences will help you to withstand the enemy. Consider well, and answer me to-morrow. If you refuse I shall understand that you have deliberately abandoned yourself to Satan and cast me off as a stranger. Yes, and a stranger I will be to you thereafter."

"No, Lewis, don't say that! You cannot understand," answered Frank piteously.

But at that Lewis walked away, and Frank, giving a deep groan as his brother turned the corner, went straight to the nearest tavern.

He was reeling drunk that afternoon for the first time in his life. He kept on drinking for a week, and from that through long years the brothers were never known to speak.

Frank, going from bad to worse, lost his position, lost his character, lost all regard for himself, and when I returned to Brandleton at the end of eight years was the sot and jest of the town. The change in him

was shocking to behold, though he was still a handsome man and vigorous, for even liquor had not yet destroyed the beauty of those regular features, nor greatly wrecked the strength of that perfect and muscular frame.

“No, you must not shake hands with me,” he said. “Nobody does ; ’t isn’t respectable. Go away. I’m beyond helping.” He would not look me in the eye, nor take the work I offered him in my own town.

“Too late,” he said. “I should do no better there. No, I can’t tell you why. You could not understand it all. Nothing but the body of the man you knew is here—and the memory. The soul is gone and the spring broken.”

I was thirty-five then, hardened to the world, but when I left poor Frank I could almost have cried from pure sorrow.

The Brandleton Town Council had telegraphed for me to come and advise concerning the strengthening of their new bridge against an unusually high spring flood. When I looked at the river it seemed a strange stream, so much greater was its volume than any I had ever seen between those banks, and so vast the mass of its driftwood. Too much of the waterway was occupied by the new piers which, placed too close together and acting like a dam, piled the river up between its high shores so that the flood, usually smooth, took a slight slope just before reaching the bridge, and sweeping beneath it broke into foam on meeting the still reach be-

low. Half a mile up was an arable island of some four hundred acres, which I remembered as having bluff edges. Now it was but a few feet out of water.

"Why, there are buildings on it!" said I, in surprise, to the mayor.

"Yes, Lewis Burgess bought it some years ago," he replied; "and those are his barns and house. If the water rises much more, his property may suffer."

"Is he there now?"

"Yes, with his wife and two children. His hired men live on the other side. Burgess thinks he is in no danger, and the water was never yet known to be over his island."

Then the mayor went on to explain his belief that the bridge was safe, unless a boom some thirty miles above Brandleton should break, and letting its sawlogs go, jeopardize the structure by battering or forming a jam. To lose it would be a grave inconvenience to the inhabitants of the town, the site of which takes in land on both sides the Maskadeesis.

I at once ordered the convenient distribution of a considerable quantity of timber, certain long spars, ropes, and other material owned by the corporation, and likely to be useful. The work was done before dark, and that night I was engaged till late in pondering over the professional question.

About midnight a telegram from Wales Landing, twenty-five miles up river, informed us that the North

Water was coming down, and the stream rising more rapidly than ever. Going out once more to look at the flood, I found many people on the bridge and its approaches, shivering as they listened to the gradually increasing roar.

Below the piers the white roll of breakers, distinctly more heavy than those of the afternoon, could be seen by the moonlight. Using two locomotive headlights to scan the river's surface, I could make out no change in the character of the driftwood ; it still consisted mainly of bark, slabs, branches, cord-wood, small trunks, stumps, and such matter, of no important battering power.

From Lewis Burgess' house on the island came gleams of many lights ; it was clear that the family were not sleeping. No more was the town, for on both sides of that swift flood were hundreds of illuminated windows.

Going back to the hotel I halted by the open bar-room door, whence came a well-remembered voice in clear song. It was the voice of poor Frank, who was amusing a vile audience with what was to me a dreadful simulation of his old-time gayety.

Close to my ear next morning my landlord's voice shouted, "Wake up, sir ! wake up ! The boom's broke !" and shaken by the shoulder, I sprang from bed to floor. While hastily dressing I heard a strange roar, as of a steady, mighty wind, from the river.

Though the sun was not up when I reached the street, streams of people, some throwing on or buttoning their clothes as they ran, were making for the bridge.

Both banks and many housetops were crowded with townsmen, all gazing intently toward Burgess Island.

“There’s a jam forming at the head,” said the mayor, when I reached him, “though the logs are not down there yet.”

Since midnight the Maskadeesis had become indescribably more formidable. Mingled with such small stuff as had then been running were now heavy masses of broken bridge and wharf timber, huge stumps and trunks of great trees, with tops and roots high out of water, which looked as though the hurrying torrent had torn them violently from its shores. One of these great trees, coming broadside against a pier, hung balanced ; its root, caught now by the force of the swift slope, bore downward ; while, bending, groaning, and dashing, the spreading top was pushed up against the current ; then the root floated higher, escaped the torrent’s grip somewhat, and, with fearful straining and gyrations was thrust up stream as the top swayed down.

Lest a jam should form against this breakwater I sent a man down the pier’s face to cut the trunk. He had not struck a dozen strokes when the immense tree broke with a report like rifled cannon, and the ends released rushed over the swift slope each side of the pier.

It was clear that wide and sudden inundation had occurred in the primeval forest whence the North Water came, for many of the largest trunks carried freight of wild beasts—foxes, wolves, lynxes, and bears. Perhaps the strangest thing seen on that tragic morning was the curious treadmill in which one of these bears worked. It was formed by a huge tree, which because the greatest weight of its roots was on the side opposite the greatest weight of its branches, rolled slowly back and forth as it came, with an ever-varying, eccentric motion, according to the nature of the current, so that the brown bear was compelled to crawl to and fro constantly, with many a stagger and many a dip.

One wolf, cowering near a high root, was shot dead by a marksman ashore, and so much like murder seemed the killing of that defenseless, imprisoned felon of the woods, that a loud groan went up from the crowd, and thereafter the beasts were allowed to float on to whatever doom the flood might bear them. How they fared as they passed through the chutes between the piers, no man could tell me afterward, for every eye was almost constantly directed upward to catch the first view of the coming logs.

Burgess Island had now no shore line. Its position was marked by the buildings, by a huddled group of field animals, horses, cattle, and sheep, by the figure of a wading man passing from building to building, and by the calmness of the shallow over the island's area,

around which the river raged in two rough branches. Above the island the water was obviously somewhat backed up, and I could perceive that trees and other drifting wood had gathered about the head, forming one of those unaccountable "jams" which often break away disastrously. This jam, rising with the water that it forced up, was now some feet above the river surface on the submerged island, and extended like wing dams on each side.

Under the bridge piers the furious rush momentarily increased. Turning my attention to this, I looked no more toward the island till a sudden shout arose, "The logs!" And there they came, the van of their array streaming loosely down the channels by the island.

Climbing to the top of the truss, so that I could see far up river, its whole surface seemed covered with logs lying close together, as if massed for attack.

While I gazed, the dam above Burgess Island partially broke away, and a sheet of water, leaving the floating stuff behind, hurried down upon the farm. It whirled away the unresisting sheep at a breath; it soon swept down too, the struggling cattle and plunging horses. Then came the drift and logs like battering-rams against the distant barns, which, with a flying loose of boards and rafters, fell in, all silently to our ears, and were hurled toward the frame house.

But the house rose with the stream which passed freely beneath its piled foundation. It came, well sup-

ported by its lower flooring, floating clear of the pursuing timber, and bringing up the rear of an immense mass of *débris*, which was now being driven into closer formation. The house swung slowly around, settling down for some minutes, then moved on toward the bridge, with the side presented to us, much tilted up.

Soon a scuttle in the roof was flung up, and Lewis Burgess appearing, lifted out upon the shingles his wife and children. They clung together in attitudes of extreme terror, while a dog that had sprung out after them, ran back and forth from eaves to ridge, pausing at each edge as if about to leap, and again cowering back to resume his search for a safer venture.

From the crowded banks and housetops of Brandleton went up a shout of horror as the family appeared, and many strong men ran wildly to and fro, as if in despair of finding help for the helpless. To reach them through the drifting masses was beyond possibility, and it looked as though nothing could be done but watch them drift to the death that inevitably awaited them, if the house, wedged in with groaning trees and shooting timber, should slide down madly between the piers and crash against the girders as it flew.

A large group of men stood watching me after I descended, as though expecting directions for a rescue, and I, without an idea, could only look despairingly at the rapidly approaching house. Ready to be commanded by any one with sense and meaning, their eyes

held me responsible for the proper use of their strength and good-will.

Even while I stood with that dismayed sense of being held accountable, a new sound rose above the din of the waters, and looking over the upper edge of the bridge, I saw that the bridge was threatened once more. An immense tree, a very thick and long pine, had lodged against the pier nearest the northern abutment.

So close together was the drift now packed that this pine, caught midway, did not teeter with and against the stream, because, almost on the instant of its lodgment, it was submitted to the strain of a drive of smaller trees and bridge and wharf wreck, which, struggling to pass the big tree, were held back against the surface of the river. There was crunching and groaning in the restrained mass, upending of slabs and thrashing about of stumps ; the big pine bent, its huge branches were partly rent away, every instant I expected to hear the loud report of its crack and break.

But still it held, and very soon the checked driftwood a short distance up stream was much wider than its base as formed by the straining pine. The jam so much dreaded by the town councilors of Brandleton was forming beneath our eyes with astonishing speed, and unless it could be broken the bridge would certainly go.

All this had happened in the short space of time while I was hurrying an active man down the face of

the pier to cut the lodged tree. Before he could strike, even while he was steadying himself for the first blow, a voice from my side interposed.

“Not a stroke !” shouted Frank Burgess, with a clear cry that was heard above all other sounds, and clambering, or rather tumbling recklessly down the face of the pier, he laid hands on the axe, and tearing it from the grasp of the astonished man, he turned to me.

With his intense excitement almost every trace of his degradation had vanished from his face, and so natural, so confident, so imperative did he look that I uttered not a word of protest.

“Pray God that a jam may form !” he shouted, returning hastily to the roadway. “It’s the only chance to save them !” and he waved his hand toward the advancing house.

It was drifting now, not more than two hundred and fifty yards distant, with the outer or southerly stream of timber and wreck that came pouring in two columns around the blocked mass.

The family, still clinging together, had fallen to their knees as if in prayer, and still the white dog inquiringly looked down, cowered, shrank back, and so ran piteously from edge to edge of the roof.

Then, as if by magic, a jam was completed between the northern abutment and the second pier, for an array of heavy trees on the outer edge of the packing timber

had, by the pressure, become in a manner locked together, and these, coming sidewise against the second pier, stopped, and, being swept in, were straightway firmly connected with the butt of the big pine.

When this had occurred the jam, after extending its up-stream face, slowly swung northward and soon blocked the open space between the north abutment and the first pier. Every front stick was a keystick, as all will understand who have seen one of those astonishing sudden formations that Northern lumbermen call timber-jams, structures so totally beyond human contrivance that their creation is always inexplicable, yet of frequent occurrence on swift and heavily timbered streams.

The house was now nearly motionless in the surrounding float-wood, which moved gradually down, packing ever more closely, the lighter stuff thrusting up, falling back, or hurrying under; the ends of the various long timbers taking a direction across the current with the pressure of the logs, which soon, however, began to run swiftly round the south or outer edge of the jam with the gradually rising water.

Now the house apparently became stationary, then moved forward again with the rearrangement of the pack, only to stop once more. Once, as it thus brought up against the drift in front, the white dog leaped from the roof, and successfully obtaining a footing, began to make his way, with frequent cowering halts, ashore.

At that, Lewis Burgess, rising, scanned the drift as

if planning for a desperate attempt, while his wife and children stood shuddering and clutching him.

I could plainly see, though not hear, that they were shrieking, for now the house had come within less than a hundred yards of the bridge. Every moment I expected to see it collapse, or whirl away with the jam which might at any instant rush on with speed more rapid than that of its formation; or the north end of the bridge, now acting as a dam and forcing the river up, might be swept away, a danger so obvious that most of the spectators had run ashore.

During these few minutes of breathless expectation, watching the house and the river intently, I was so absorbed by the imminent tragedy that I had not cast another glance at Frank. Now a hoarse shout rose as if at once from all the people of Brandleton, who stood upon the river banks, the housetops, and the bridge. Looking around for its cause my eye fell on Frank Burgess.

In one hand he carried a hooked pulley-block, in the other a light line; he was making his way from the bridge toward the house right over the drift! Already he was twenty-five yards on his perilous journey.

His scheme was clear at a glance; the line he drew ran through a pulley lashed to the upper member of the bridge truss, and was well spliced into the end of a coil of new inch rope—all being part of the material I had sent upon the bridge the evening before. I drew

close to assist the brave fellows who stood ready to help out his desperate adventure.

After that first loud shout of admiration not a sound except the groan and yell of the river was heard as he struggled on his fearful way, knowing that a movement of the float-wood might sink him, or a sudden rush of the whole jam smash him in an instant out of the semblance of humanity.

What a path ! From tree to timber, from timber to wreckage, often making little *detours*, now rising on a swaying root, now cautiously descending, he went, trailing the light line, sometimes stopping and looking back to shake it straight that it might not become entangled.

Once a tree, as he walked along it, turned, but he deftly kept his foothold and continued to use it for his journey. Sometimes all about him drifted down a little, and he with it, coolly hauling in slack, watchful of all. About three quarters of the journey was done when he paused, paused long, looking around as the dog had looked around on his passage ashore—seeking a way of safety, the poor hero, cautious because he carried those other lives in his hand !

While he halted I looked once more to the family on the roof. Lewis Burgess, face half averted, hands wrung together tightly at his chin as though in a mighty strife of prayer, stood gazing at his brother with a quite indescribable attitude of anguish, pity, and hope. His

wife, now again on her knees, the unheeded children clinging about her, stared upon the advancing rescuer, both hands pressed to her ears, as though rigid with fear to hear the last cry of one dearly loved.

Frank paused and went aside, returned as if balked, tried the other direction, retraced his steps again, and then, with a gesture of agony, looked up at those whom he was attempting to save.

Lewis Burgess, gazing at his brother, shook his head as if in despair, and motioned as one might in saying, "Go back, it is impossible !"

The next moment Frank, after drawing in slack and laying it at his feet, plunged straight forward.

Down ! Yes, but up once more ! Again down—no, not gone—half sunken only ! Up again ! and now he threw himself forward on the windrow of edged-up slabs, till, scrambling, plunging, and with mighty effort, he gained the tree above that treacherous surface.

Now again arose that astounding shout above the roar of the torrent which drove through the piers on the south shore. Poor old Frank ! the applause of his fellow-townsmen must have been very sweet to him, so long an outcast, for as he struggled on he raised the hand with the line to his head, and taking off his dilapidated old hat raised and waved it with a delighted gesture in response.

In a few moments more he stood by the house looking upward. We could understand what he called to

his brother, for the family descended through the scuttle again. Lewis, appearing at an upper window, caught the line as it was thrown, and after hauling in its whole light length began to pull the rope over the bridge.

Frank, climbing up on a plank, while again the mighty shout arose, got through a window. Knocking a hole through the side wall he then tied the main rope firmly to a heavy, upright timber of the old-fashioned frame, first running it through the pulley-block, to which he fastened the middle of the light line.

In five minutes Mrs. Burgess and the children, drawn to the bridge in a blanket suspended from the pulley-hook, exactly as shipwrecked passengers are often rescued, were received by glad arms.

While we were hauling these helpless ones in, Frank and Lewis stood at the window hand-in-hand. Then, after hauling back the blanket, Lewis, who was a heavy man, came to the now sorely tried bridge, Frank having insisted that he should go first. Then the hero began to draw in the line for his own salvation.

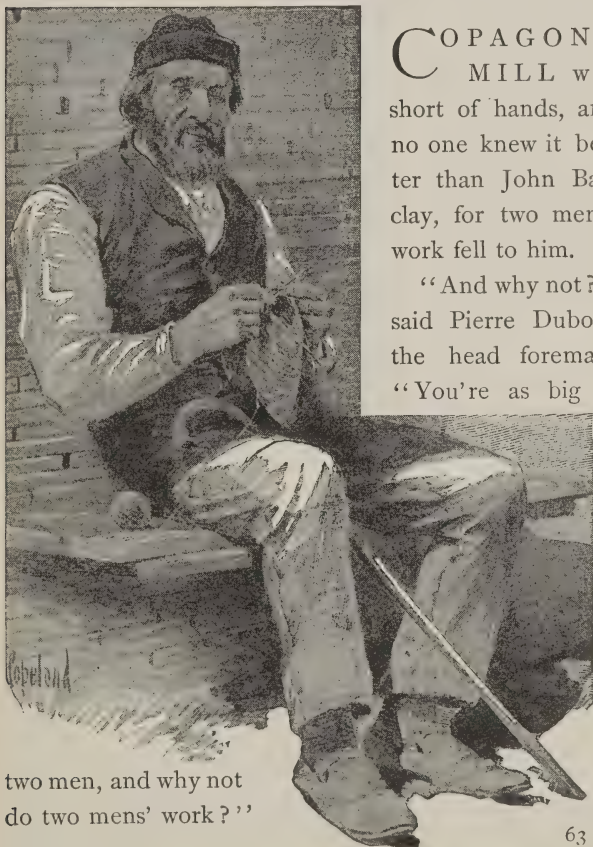
You can conceive how the people watched him, sick-hearted with fear lest the bridge should give way and release the now terrific jam—you can conceive how they yearned and prayed!

Well, their prayers were not disappointed. He was saved, saved from the river, saved from worse than the river, for that day he was rescued from himself and his past.

Lewis, receiving him as he landed, literally fell upon his brother's neck and wept. Afterward we carried them both ashore, shoulder-high, among the thronging, cheering, and weeping people—just in time too, for within five minutes the piers gave way, and driftwood, bridge, house, and all, “battlement and plank and pier, went whirling to the sea.”

What became of Frank? Why, he is happily married, has four pretty children, is mayor of Brandleton and chief engineer of the Cuniake and Brandleton Railway. If you go to his flourishing town you may discover that this story is in no way exaggerated, though they may tell it to you with different names.

A BERSERKER OF COPAGONG



COPAGONG MILL was short of hands, and no one knew it better than John Barclay, for two mens' work fell to him.

"And why not?" said Pierre Dubois, the head foreman. "You're as big as

two men, and why not do two mens' work?"

"Give me two mens' pay, then!" said John.

"Who's gettin' bigger pay 'n what you're gettin'? Bagosh, no! A man's got a right to hump hisse'f for the Concern where he's well used. It's only for a week, anyhow."

Especially by the "bagosh," Pierre betrayed his nationality as French-Canadian, and none but Canadians can quite understand how this galled John, who was tyler or doorkeeper of the Copagong Orange Lodge.

John had been for two days taking three-inch planks from the circular saw, often a job for three men, and always previously for two. All the mill hands that could be spared from the saws were out on the piling-ground shipping stuff to meet the clamorous demands of a new railway; but it was not the tax on his huge strength that vexed John.

"Was there ever a lazy bone in me body?" he indignantly asked his wife on the second evening.

"Who could say that, John?" she replied proudly.

"I dar' them!" rumbled John. "No, it's the injustice of it. And no thanks in the Pea-soup that's set foreman over us! Well, let him see where's the one man will handle his planks in the morning."

"Ah, now, John, don't do that! Sure, the press will be soon over, and your job easy to the stren't' of you again."

The little round woman tried to put her hands up to

his face to soothe him, but he lifted her up and aside, and set her on top of a high chest of drawers, all quite without violence ; then went tramping away up the saw-dust road that leads to 'Dolph Bergeron's tavern, "The Lumberman's Rest." John set his big feet down so heavily it was plain he intended a monstrous spree.

His wife and son, a yellow-headed, brawny youth of sixteen years, shut themselves in and sat together, silent as if there were death in the house, while all the neighbors drifted to the cabins nearest the tavern. There the women stayed, but the men went on to see "the holy terror"—that was the only expression which they thought adequate to big John on the spree. A son of his employer, a youth who had been reading Norse literature, once described John on a spree as "a drunken Berserker," and I suppose you all know that the Berserkers were uncommonly strong, eccentric, and destructive Vikings.

When John left Bergeron's place at eleven o'clock that night he left it a wreck. He had smashed the big box-stove with one downward blow from the side of his fist ; he had kicked the bar counter almost into kindling wood ; he had pitched Bergeron head first up twelve feet into the open door of his own haymow ; he had ended by lifting a barrel of whisky to drink out of the bung, and then throwing it through a partition. Then, perfectly senseless, but quite steady on his legs, John allowed himself to be guided to his home, and all

Copagong, except John's wife, went to sleep till the mill whistle screamed before daylight.

At half-past ten o'clock next day John awoke to consciousness that he had been crazy, and to wonder what he had done the night before. Perhaps he had struck some man and killed him. John always had that fear after a spree, though his disposition when drunk was merely to break things and throw people around as a sort of huge joke if they interfered with his herculean sportiveness. He could not remember any of his proceedings after the diluted high wines had fairly gotten into his head, through which the thundering chug-chug of the gangsaws and the fierce whirring of the circulars now drove knifelike pain, for his cabin was on the hill edge nearest the mill.

He lay still, sick with shame which he would not confess to any other soul. "No ; he would let 'em all understand he had done just right. He had shown that Pea-soup foreman ! He'd 'learn' the Concern not to impose on a man. He'd show 'em that if the gang was short-handed before, it would be shorter-handed with John Barclay laid off. Hadn't he a right to do just what he pleased ? Let 'em give him the sack if they dast ; but he knew well they dassent ; they was too short-handed ; he was too good a man !"

Moreover, he reckoned, and felt cowardly at the bottom of his heart to reckon so, that he would get full benefit of the indulgence shown to drunkenness

in that rude lumbering country. Bosses regarded it as a thing to be expected, like floods or forest fires, and quite as incalculable an element in their operations.

In the short intervals of silence between the thumping gangsaws and the shrieking circulars John could hear his little wife moving around in the other room. He knew she would not give him one cross word, no matter what he had done, and that was what made him so afraid to get up and face her. She would just look at him kindly, and he would see she had been crying in the night. Now she would be trying to smile cheerfully, and that always made him feel so mean.

But, all the same, he'd go up to Bergeron's again, right off after breakfast, and he'd bet that a big bunch of men would knock off and join him at noon. Then the gang would be still "short-handeder"—oh, he'd show the Concern if they could put a "Pea-soup" foreman on top of loyal Orangemen !

John was horribly thirsty ; but he was still too much afraid of his little wife's wan smile to get up, or call for water. There he lay, listening in torture and obstinate Berserker rage, which he tried to direct at the foreman, though really wholly so disgusted with himself that he could not express and dared not acknowledge, the feeling—that feeling which might drive him, as it often drove the old Norse Berserkers, to defiant physical violence, lest they should be laughed at instead of feared after they had fuddled themselves on mead.

Sometimes John could hear the dull movement, the muffled, crackling sound of refuse slabs and scantling on their way to the great iron waste-burner that towers a hundred feet above Copagong Mill. This refuse travels in a wide wooden trough set on an inclined plane ; it is drawn upward through the trough by an endless chain of flattened links, from some of which short iron uprights stand to force the waste along.

That opening by which the refuse enters the stack is some thirty feet above the fire, which, fed continually by fresh material, crackles in a great circular chamber perhaps forty feet wide. As John thought of the tophet usually there, he asked himself whom had Pierre Dubois put to tending the waste-burner to-day ? That set John to thinking of his own son, Billy. There must have been a redistribution of work on account of himself being off. Now he had previously refused to let Billy tend the waste-burner. John had heard of two being drawn into such furnaces. Stepping into the trough to disentangle a jam of the waste stuff, they had somehow got their feet caught in the endless chain.

That Pea-soup foreman had wished Billy to keep on at the job. Perhaps he had put him back at it to-day in rearranging the force ! If so—John did not formulate what he would do to the foreman, but certainly something dreadful.

Now he had something to get up for. So he lifted his big bulk as noiselessly as he could and put on his

boots, of which his wife and Billy had relieved him. He knew his wife could hear him, for his ears told him she had suddenly put the frying-pan on the stove to cook his breakfast.

John resolved to wait till breakfast was ready, for, thirsty as he was, he did not wish to be under his wife's kind eye one moment longer than he must. He sat on the side of the bed till he heard her pouring hot water upon the tea leaves in the tin pot. With that he rose, opened the door, and didn't meet her eyes.

"Where's Billy?" he asked gruffly.

"Tending the waste-burner, John."

"He is, is he? I'll——"

"Oh, John dear, don't do anything hasty! It had to be fixed that way. Johnny Larocque was took off the tendin' because he's used to the sawin', and could help to take your place—there's three at your job to-day. Billy knows how to tend the burner, and so——"

John drank a dipperful of cold water, and then strode to the door. He could plainly see Billy on the platform at the edge of the great trough, with an iron-shod pole in hand, watching the humps and masses of refuse wood that traveled past him and-up and into the opening, whence they disappeared and fell to the tophet below which sent up a long banner of smoke to the breeze above Copagong Mill.

The waste-burner was nearer John than Billy was, and the mill was beyond the boy, who was too intent

on the waste to notice his father gesticulating as he shouted, "Come out of that!" John knew he might as well have held his breath, for the pounding and screaming of the saws deafened Billy to the prodigious yells by which this latter-day Berserker somewhat allayed his rage.

"If I could get at him without going round and through the mill, I'd go and pull him off," said John. "But give me my feed first. Then I'll go and settle that Pea-soup for good."

His wife, without a word, set the food before him, hoping breakfast would improve his temper. Then she stood by the window watching Billy work, while her husband ate.

It suddenly struck her that Billy was acting strangely. Certainly he was standing in the trough and moving slowly upward with the waste. But that was nothing unusual. What puzzled her was his attitude. The boy was bending forward, his hands on a hump of the refuse, and seemingly straining as with his body.

She saw him lift his face and look toward the furnace ahead. He was within sixty feet of it. Suddenly he stood up, lifted his iron-shod pole and began thrusting hard as if at his feet. He wriggled his shoulders, twisted and looked again at the waste-burner. It was not more than fifty feet away now.

"Why, John," exclaimed the mother, "what's Billy doing? See!"

At that instant the youth flung up his hands desperately and looked toward her. There was a momentary hush between the screams of great saws ; Billy's shriek came in that instant, and John Barclay sprang to the door. He understood the case instantly.

"His foot's caught," John shouted. "Stop the engine ! Murder ! Stop the engine ! My boy's caught. Oh, my God, he'll be into the waste-burner !"

John ran as he yelled. He might as well have saved his voice. No man in the mill could hear him through the pounding saws. No man on the piling-ground was in sight or hearing of him.

John ran straight down the hill for the base of the waste-burner. The round chimney of riveted iron plate is built on a foundation of masonry rising six feet from the ground. There are four iron doors or manholes just above the masonry. As the Berserker ran he saw his son fall backward, head sloping down and toward the mill, as the result of a desperate wrenching at his boot. Its heel was caught in one of the flat links, much as the boot of a brakeman is sometimes held between two close-set rails. The mother hurried after her husband, shrieking unheard. She fell, she rolled down the steep rock edge of the hill, she sprang up, still shrieking, and ran against a pile of scantling, which being end on, caught her dress and held her. John had crashed through and over it. She could no longer see her son ;

he was hidden by the round of the waste-burner. "Oh ! oh ! oh ! he's drawed in—oh-h !" she screamed and fell senseless.

John Barclay knew it to be improbable that any man in the mill would see the boy being dragged upward, and get the engine stopped in time to save him by bringing the endless chain to a halt. John knew too, that he could not get around to and through the mill in time to save his son.

There was but one chance of rescue—the fire might be crowned high on top with waste not yet ignited ; the boy might fall where the turn of the chain passed under the trough inside the door ; he might fall on unfired wood. If some one were there to catch him or lift him—for it was almost certain he would be badly hurt by the fall—he might be saved.

But the chance was desperately small. Instead of falling Billy might be dragged back under the trough and mangled, perhaps have his leg torn off, before being released by the link. It was a desperate chance even if he should fall unhurt, for the low edges of the heap in the furnace would certainly be all flame and deep coals. How should any rescuer dash across that inferno, climb the unignited middle pile, endure the smoke, seize the boy, and escape with him back across the fire to a manhole ?

John knew the dreadful situation perfectly. He also knew his own mind. He would enter—he would die

there if Billy must die—he would never live to face his wife and know that his rage and drunkenness had brought his boy that day to tending the waste-burner.

As the big man ran he picked up a long plank and still ran. It would bridge the fire for a few moments. He had to drop it to open the iron door. Then he thrust it in.

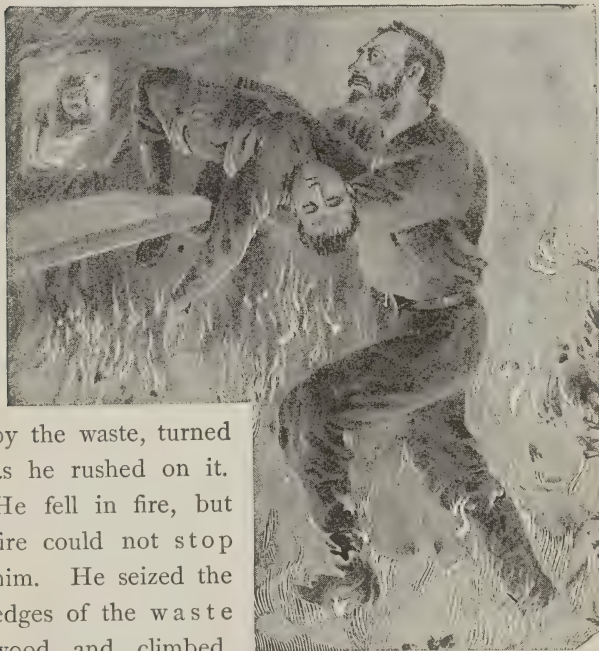
A moment later many men, running from the piling-ground, whence they had seen Billy's peril, came round a corner close to the waste-burner just in time to see John crawl into what seemed certain death. At the head of them was Pierre Dubois, who had been hurrying work in the piling-yard.

“Planks !” he shouted. “Here ! Those green ones ! Hurry ! Shove them in—here—open the other manholes—shove planks in all !” Twenty men were working at once.

As John sprang through the manhole and knelt on his plank a moment he saw that the cone of waste wood was unlit on top. The fire was indeed uncommonly low, its fierce edges narrower than usual, for the refuse had been unusually heavy for some days. He saw that the endless chain thirty feet above him was still running, for small scantling and sawdust were steadily falling.

Next moment Billy appeared at the upper opening. As the chain drew him on it jerked him through a complete somersault ; his head hung down one instant, in the next he fell.

It takes a man about two seconds to spring over thirty feet of ground. But through ten feet wide of fire ! John's plank, crazily supported at the inner end



by the waste, turned as he rushed on it. He fell in fire, but fire could not stop him. He seized the edges of the waste wood and climbed.

He rose up the cone. He was over its edge when Billy fell.

As the giant raised his arms some scantling came down, battering his face as he braced himself for the shock. Blue smoke was all about him, but he could see through it, for smoke mostly draws to the center,

and he was on one side of the middle. His clothing was smoldering, his hands terribly burned from his fall ; his boots were cracked and hard as coals ; but it was oh, to save Billy from this torment !

John caught his falling son, and a shower of small wood fell on both as the shock flung him down on the cone. He rose with his son in his arms and rushed at a manhole. There were faces there, surely ! With his feet in fire he lifted Billy high, and found a plank under the boy. Then John knew no more.

It was Pierre Dubois who sprang to the giant's rescue, not through fire, but on one of the planks now thrust in ; and a perilous deed was that too. Pierre, coming through the north manhole, stooped and seized the big man before he could fall, even at that moment when those outside in the east manhole drew forth the plank on which John had set Billy. John's charred coat gave way in Pierre's grasp. Pierre grasped the giant by the throat, for his beard was burned off. Pierre clung to the plank with his legs, and threw both hands around John's scorched head. And so they were drawn forth together. But the Berserker never saw his wife's face again.

He told the story himself two years later as he sat knitting one summer day in the shade of a lumber pile at Copagong, where I landed as a stranger after fishing all the morning.

If I was surprised to see a man knitting I was more surprised to find, when I came near him, that he was totally blind. So I hailed him and we fell into talk together. "It's cheering to see you so contented," I said toward the end.

"I am contented," he said. "I wouldn't have my eyes back again and the heart I had with them—yes, and for a year and more after I lost my sight. All the time I was trying to learn the knitting, and me blind ; but it wasn't till I could turn the heel of the stocking I felt I'd be willing to live so. I tried and tried, and then sudden-like it came to me ; it was like it was God moved my fingers so I learned how. Then I knowed I could earn my keep and not be a burden on Billy ; and I do earn it, and I thank God, and every day since then I have been resting easy in his mercy."

IN SKELETON POOL

DUE north is the general direction of the Brazeau River, but it takes one very sharp turn to the west, and in the angle is "The Devil's Elbow," which is so much a terror to raftsmen that none but the boldest will hire for the Brazeau drive.

Beneath the surges of its great eddy, Skeleton Pool, the bones of many drowned men are supposed to drift endlessly around ; and he is a past master of river-craft who can boast truly of having safely run the Elbow twice or thrice.

It is difficult to convey in words a picture of so complicated a phenomenon as the Elbow. Unless the reader can be made to realize the configuration of the ground, the surge of the river against the precipice, the fury with which it turns to roar away on its western course, the impulse with which it hurls off the eddy toward Tower Island, and the remorselessness of that whirlpool's grasp and assault on such timber cribs as enter it, he will not quite understand Duncan Stewart's adventure.

Running out of a low-lying, timbered country, the Brazeau's course is intercepted by the face of a plateau

some three hundred feet higher. Into this bluff, which elsewhere descends less precipitously, the torrent, by many ages of persistence, has cut such an angle as a huge carpenter's square might fit. Three pines, bunched just at the apex of this angle, and conspicuous as the only trees on the upper level, swing their long arms out over the sheer cliff, there sliced straight down as a stack is by a hay-knife. Almost incessantly these long arms seem to gesticulate in the current of air rushing up out of the chasm.

Opposite this, some four hundred feet distant, the face of Tower Island rises straight about one hundred feet; and on every side but one shoots up as suddenly. It divides the Brazeau into rapids of nearly equal descent; but the north or Devil's Elbow channel has the "draw," and takes most of the water.

The trick of running a crib of logs safely through is to gain the south channel, which, unless the crib gets into the mild eddy at the foot of Tower Island, quickly hurries the timber into the calm reach a mile below. Here high spring wagons wait, at a tavern kept by the Widow Black, to carry the raftsmen back to the head.

Sometimes, at long intervals, a wagon laden with men rattles by without a cheery song. In such a case, it is a fair inference that some gang, having missed the turn at the dreadful angle, are being whirled away dead down the river, or rolled among the vexed bones in the depths of Skeleton Pool,

Not that the Elbow is certain death. Probably five cribs out of six get safely through, or lose but one or two men. I believe this to be oftenest the result of sudden changes in the river's action, though raftsmen insist that all depends on the judgment, strength, and nerve of a crew.

For this run each crib carries four men and eight sweeps, four at each end. If carried into the Elbow channel, all hands, when near the angle, take to the sweeps at the rear.

Just as the crib's front seems likely to crash against the precipice the stern begins to wheel down, and the men assist this action of the current. If they miss here, and are borne sidewise away instead of stern down, the crib does not get close enough ashore, and the thrust from the precipice commonly carries them into the raving edge of the whirlpool.

There the crib usually is wrenched instantly to pieces or plunged so deep that the men are swept off. In this case they are wholly beyond rescue, and are drowned.

Well-made cribs have been known to wheel, tossed like corks in the pool, for ten days before breaking up ; but never, perhaps, except once, did one of these sad derelicts carry a living man.

In the summer of 1868, at the beginning of my apprenticeship to a surveyor, I was sent up the Brazeau. Duncan Stewart was my chief,

“A better fellow than Stewart never lived,” my master had said. “Years ago he was given to drink, but now he’s quite reformed. He hasn’t touched a drop for two years.

“I’m giving him this job,” my master went on, “partly because he’ll do it well, partly because he’ll do it cheaply, and partly because I want to help a lame dog over a stile. But mind, you’re my apprentice, and while you give due obedience to Mr. Stewart, it’s your duty to let me know promptly if anything goes wrong. After all’s said, it is impossible to place perfect confidence in a man who was long lost in drink.”

I liked Stewart from the start. He was kind and friendly; he took pains to teach me, and often entrusted me with the transit, taking the chain himself.

“I mean to make a surveyor of you before this job’s done,” he would say.

Everything went well until we camped at the Widow Black’s. Next morning we were driven up to “the head.” Some of the men, though they were not drunk, had obtained whisky at the tavern. Stewart seemed out of sorts. No doubt he was tortured by the smell of and craving for liquor.

That afternoon, after starting the new line, Stewart left me to run it, saying that he would see the camp put in shape for a long stay. When I came back he was sleeping; he slept while I supped; and when I turned in beside him he made no stir.

The men were whispering, and I thought them "up to something," but my fatigue was greater than my curiosity, and I was soon sound asleep.

"Ned ! Mr. Ned ! wake up ! rouse, rouse, there's trouble breeding !"

I sat up to find old John Shouldice shaking me.

"What's up, John?"

"They're all drunk except me."

"Drunk?"

"Drunk as fools ! The surveyor too."

"Mr. Stewart ? Impossible !"

"Yes, Mr. Stewart himself. Burns and Fletcher put six bottles into their packs this morning. The surveyor had some. Now it's all gone, and they're wild for more."

"Well, they can't get any ; that's one good thing."

"They're going back to the widow's."

"But they can't in the state they're in. It's five miles after they cross."

"They're going to run down in the bateau."

"What?" I started to my feet. "The Devil's Elbow will get every man of them !"

"Not if they catch the south channel. Burns knows the river well ; but he's too drunk."

Hurrying out I found the ten men grouped, with Stewart staggering among them.

"Yes, sir, I can run ye over all right, sir," Burns was saying.

"What does this mean?" I asked.

"It's all ri'," said Stewart; "you go back to bed."

"Better go yourself," I said, "and the rest of you. Come, I'm not going to stand any nonsense."

"We're takin' our orders from the surveyor," said Burns, "an' I'd be pleased to know who set you over us. Hi! We're going where there's whisky, so we are. Come on, boys!"

They staggered down to the big red boat.

"Shouldice, there's no stopping them. The Elbow will have them as sure as fate."

"We'll have to go with them," said brave old John. "I know the water. I've been over it fifty times. You take the bow. We'll get over all right enough. Some of them ain't too drunk to do the rowing. But for the humanity of it, I should feel a sight more like letting the brutes go than risk our skins for 'em."

Nevertheless that was what we did.

The run was a wild adventure, but we gained the south channel, left the Elbow shrieking far behind, and reached the Widow Black's at one o'clock in the morning.

When we awoke the sun was well up. Most of our men were lying about the sheds in a state of deep intoxication. Stewart was nowhere to be seen.

"He went up with the first gang at daylight," said the widow. "He's run the south channel once already, and now he's back, wild to run the Elbow. Last I

heard, he was offering twenty dollars to any gang that 'ud try it, an' the boys was laughin' at him. Oh, he's far gone with his liquor."

"Give me some breakfast, quick," said I. "I'll follow him. And look you, woman, if you give our men another drop, there'll be trouble for you. You can depend on that."

I knew she had no license to sell liquor.

"Bah!" she cried, snapping her fingers in my face. "I don't fear you, not a bit. The boys would take care of you, or any one else, that interfered with my business. But there's no more drink for that crowd. I'll tell you that to please you. Not a cent of money has one of them left."

While I hastily ate my pork and beans, I heard the noise of men coming up to the wagons. Stewart was not among them.

"We left him layin' on the raft," mumbled the gigantic foreman, Tom Benson. "None of the boys would fetch him this trip. He swears he'll go over the Elbow if he has to swim for it. But the cook'll watch him."

I leaped into a wagon, and went up to the head of the rapids. Shouldice went with us, but he was too old to render much service.

When we reached the raft, there stood the men who had preceded us, bunched together and gazing down the river.

Far away, and drifting into the Elbow channel, went a crib with one man upon it, who danced and waved his hat, then stood looking ahead into the fearful angle, then flung up his arms and leaped to and fro as if in delirium.

"It's Mr. Stewart!" said the cook. "When I wasn't thinking of him he sneaked down to the lower cribs, knocked away the bands, and was off!"

"You've seen the last of him," said Tom Benson, now thoroughly sobered, "unless the timber goes through all right. Even then he'll surely be swept off. But there's a rope on that crib. Maybe he'll know enough to hang on."

"I'll go down with you, Tom. We must save him, somehow," said I. In a few moments our men were rowing hard to pull out of "the Devil's draw," as Tom called it.

"Look, Ned! Not *you*, boys! Pull—pull for your lives! Let into it. But *you*, Ned—look!"

At that moment we could see Stewart's crib slanting up like a roof, and apparently just at the angle. He was on his knees, clutching something.

"It's the rope he's got!" said Tom.

Then his crib began to swing around. Next moment the cliff of Tower Island hid man and timber.

"If we don't see him pass down ahead of us, we'll haul over into the eddy at the foot of the island," said Benson, as we passed into the south channel.

That is what we did. Soon we landed and began the ascent of the Tower, for it was impossible to see into Skeleton Pool from the low rocks at the island's foot.

"But it's too late, I fear," said Tom. "He's gone long ago, and we can't save the timber. But, anyhow, let us see it flying round!"

When we stood above the pool, there was the crib almost beneath our feet, racing up the eddy. From below, had there been standing room, we might have reached it with a pike-pole.

But a hundred men with pike-poles could not have held it for a moment. The forces of the pool carried it away with incredible speed, and flung it about like a chip. But Stewart was there, and alive.

He was even safe for the time. Sobered by the wetting and the horror, he had contrived to take several turns around a loading stick with the half-inch rope he found aboard. These turns lay spirally along the stick and formed loose bands. Through one of these he had thrust his legs up to the thighs, through another he had pushed his head and shoulders.

Lying face down, he clutched the loading stick. Up the Skeleton Pool flew the crib, till so near the mighty shoulder of the downward torrent that we expected it to overwhelm Stewart.

At the plunge a roller broke over him. He was whirled out toward the Elbow, then swiftly down, and

around the dreadful oval again, hurrying so close to the sheer wall below our feet that Benson dropped a pebble beyond the crib as it passed.

Sometimes the crib was carried into the center of the pool, where it floated with little tossing, slowly turning in a small round for many minutes. Then the outer forces called for another struggle to tear asunder the crib, and drew it out and threw themselves upon it, and offered it to the demons of the angle, and hurled and oscillated it again.

“It’s terrible with him so close, and we can’t help him any more than if we were babies,” said Benson.

“If we could only make him see us !” I suggested.

“What good? He’d feel all the worse. You see he’s got to die. If he saw us he’d have hope, and that would keep the life in him longer, and he’d suffer more in the end.”

“No ! He’d feel helped ; he’d die easier if he knew we were by him,” I insisted.

Benson threw a small stone at the crib. Then we threw handfuls. But a wind came up out of the chasm, and a gale went with its waters, and our efforts were vain.

If any pebble struck Stewart he made no sign.

Benson climbed a pine, and cut off a large branch with his knife. “This is the thing,” said he, and waited.

When the crib, racing upward, was within thirty feet

of our cliff, he dropped the branch. It wavered down with the sway of a parachute, then turned over and over with the up current, and fell far behind the timber.

But we dropped branch after branch, and at last one was blown by the wind so that it fell lightly upon Stewart himself. He turned on his side and looked up ; but he did not see us until the crib was running down the outer current. Then he kicked himself nearly free, sat up, and waved his hand.

Just then a roller struck the crib, rushed straight at him, and threw his body off the loading stick.

But his feet were still held by the rope. He recovered his position, passed the band again over his shoulders, and turned his head curiously from side to side as he flew around, gazing at his tumultuous prison.

“I’ve got it. We’ll save him !” shouted big Tom.
“Stay here till I get back, Ned.”

He was off without another word.

Two hours passed before he returned with a “bunch” of men, and all that time I silently watched Stewart. The crib had begun to sag, I thought, when on the crests of the steeper rollers.

“It’ll break up soon,” said Tom, the moment he returned. “Now, boys, down with that tree ; put in your best strokes. Fell it straight out.”

Four axemen attacked a huge white pine, some seventy feet inland, while the others cut away the underbrush and small trees for its fall. The top, when

it crashed down, projected forty feet beyond the cliff, and the branches that broke away fell in a green shower about Stewart's crib.

In ten minutes, big Tom, lying out on the tree like a sailor, cut away such branches as would interfere with the rope, and passed a cable over the outermost crotch that was sufficiently strong.

When the rope began to descend of its own weight, he crawled back to us.

"We can do no more," said he, shaking as with an ague. "Now we'll see if the surveyor can save himself!"

When Stewart passed under the rope for the first time, he sat up and raised his hand, but could not touch the noose. Then he made the surveyor's signal of "down."

We lowered till the noose touched the water and was snatched along by the fierce stream. Then we drew it up till it seemed to hang about five feet above the sluice-like stream.

The second time Stewart came under us, he stood up stoopingly, braced himself, held to his rope by one hand, and prepared to run his free arm and his head into the noose.

The rope suddenly swung out beyond his reach. We staggered and shook, tumbling backward from the edge and against one another, uttering meaningless cries, with the shock and reaction of that disappointment.

“If that happens again, some of us may fall over,” said Tom. Taking a new hitch with the rope, he brought us the shore end to hold on by.

The crib was now very plainly sagging as it rose and fell.

Once more Stewart rose, and tried to put his arm through the noose. The rope struck him on the head ; he lost his grasp of his own rope and fell down, but saved himself, and crawled back to his bands in time to get within them before passing into the breakers.

But at the shoulder of the rapids the crib began to break up. One side-stick whirled loose, then another. Both were thrust up from the pool's outer edge soon afterward. They shot half out of water before falling.

The fourth attempt was long delayed, for the crib moved into the middle of the pool and whirled gently around the inner circle. There Stewart loosed himself, stood up, looked at us for a moment, gazed around the shrieking waters, waved his hand toward the now descending sun, looked up to us again, raised his arms above his head and dropped them to his side with a strange gesture of utter despair.

“It's a Masonic sign !” exclaimed Tom. “And he is praying to the Lord for help ! I must save him ! Boys, I'll go down and grab him !”

Just then the crib began to run again. It was moving down stream, and would be under the rope again within two minutes.

We were sure this would be Stewart's last chance, for the crib could never hold together through another plunge into the rapid's shoulder.

"Come back. You've no time to go down!" I called to Benson.

But he had swung himself off already, and now hurried down the rope, hand over hand.

We leaned over with horror. If Benson should succeed in grasping him, could he hold on while we hauled both men up? And could we lift both up and back into safety, after raising them to the crotch of the pine? It was impossible.

What madness had possessed the foreman? To save himself he would have to drop Stewart from the tree after grasping him.

Benson was now within the noose. Only then had we eyes for Stewart and the crib.

We looked; the crib was not where we expected to see it. We looked over the whole surface of Skeleton Pool. Neither the crib nor Stewart could be seen.

Tom dangled down there alone. With the oscillation of the current, its higher billows dragged at his legs.

The men began to haul Benson up. We might save him, anyway.

I looked down into his upturned face. It was positively gleeful! Holding to the turning rope by one hand, he pointed with the outstretched forefinger of the other, as his face turned down stream.

I followed the direction. There was Stewart's crib, a quarter of a mile down the rapid. It had been quietly let go by the eddy, and we knew the surveyor would be saved at the widow's place.

Benson easily lifted himself into the tree and came ashore. No one could ever persuade him that Stewart's sign or prayer for help had not been miraculously answered, though old John Shouldice declared that cribs had once or twice before gone out of the rapids in the same way.

Stewart was taken ashore at the tavern, in a fainting condition. He did not throw away the chance afforded him. Solemnly he vowed, when he had recovered from the delirium in which his fearful adventure and exposure left him, that he would never touch liquor again.

I have known him years now, and know how much it cost him to keep his vow. Wherever he went he ran the risk of seeing liquor, and whenever he saw it or smelled it, his craving awoke.

But at the same time the remembrance of the Elbow also awoke ; and though the constant temptation to drink might well have broken the resolution of a stronger man, he had undergone an experience the lasting memory of whose terrors he could call to his aid with good effect.

JOHN MACBRIDE

HEAVY rain stopped work in the Deep Gully lock-pit about ten in the forenoon of February thirteenth. As the engine whistled "Knock off," three hundred men threw down their drills, jumpers, striking hammers and other tools used in rock excavation. Forty cart drivers unhitched their horses. Soon all hands, except the foreman, the engineman, and two others, were following the cart horses down the road to the boarding houses, half a mile away.

"Toot for glycerine," said the foreman to the engineman. "There's eight long holes I'd like to fire while the pit's clear."

"How many cans?" asked the engineman, with his hand on the whistle wire.

"One will do."

The whistle sounded five short screams and one long too-oo-oo-t after an interval of twenty seconds.

At that the stragglers in rear of the home-going procession ran a few steps. The men were morbidly afraid of nitroglycerine, which the contractor insisted on using because of its shattering effect.

In 1879, when John Macbride had the adventure I

am about to narrate, this explosive sprang into popularity with Blind River contractors, who abandoned it in the course of a twelvemonth almost as suddenly as they had taken it up, and resorted to giant powder, dynamite, and other preparations of nitroglycerine that do not, like the pure article, explode easily by concussion.

Meantime "the stuff" had terribly revealed its qualities. At Williamson's Cut, ten miles above Lobb's contract, Robert Watson had carried an apparently empty can home to his wife. He, she, and two children, were found dead in the shattered interior of their shanty. A little girl, the only survivor of the family, said that her mother had been scraping the inside of the can when the explosion occurred.

While the foreman at Wolf's Rapid was pouring the contents of a can into a hole, he spilled some, and in rising, brought his iron-shod heel down on it. The man was hurled against a rock wall, with his leg twisted out of joint at the knee, though the main charge did not explode.

As many as fifty "accidents" more or less similar had occurred along the river, but few more dreadful than the death of William Burns and Louis Bigras at the Deep Gully Cut. They were seen, about three hundred yards above the excavation, coming from the magazine in the bottom of the gully, some seven hundred yards distant from the lock-pit. Each man had received

two cans from the "glycerine boss," John Macbride. Suddenly both were blown to atoms in full view of their comrades. In and out from the swarming pit three hundred men ran howling and crying. Some fell on their knees, hiding their eyes. Others rolled in anguish. This confusion and madness of horror lasted several minutes. Probably one of the dead men had knocked the edge of a can against a boulder as he passed.

A certain mystery attending the disasters increased the terror felt for "the stuff." Men believed it would "go off of itself." Lobb's laborers insisted that the magazine should be moved out of the gully, and John Macbride elevated the whole lot to the uninhabited table land above. Had he thrown up his place as "glycerine boss," no laborer on the job would have taken it at any wages.

Five minutes had elapsed after the "toots for glycerine," when a cry came down from the beetling precipice on the south side of Deep Gully. The foreman ran out from under the heavily roofed engine shed.

"All right, Mac! Down with her!" he shouted looking upward.

Though the distance to Macbride's face was only two hundred feet, he seemed to the men in the lock-pit as high as the sky, which, seen from below, looked like a long lane of gray, running eastward and westward. Rain, driving before a wind that had already shifted around toward the north, fell slanting into the chasm, soon

lost its direction in that windless abyss, and drizzled straight down. Thin sheets of water fell from the edge of the overhanging precipice on both sides of the platform whereon Macbride lay, for the surface behind him was of flat rock with a quick slope to the gully. This slope was not so steep as house roofs usually are, but it was as steep as a man could easily walk down with security. Wet or dry, the gritty rock afforded excellent foothold.

Macbride's platform, about twelve feet wide, projected three feet beyond the rock face, and extended inward on the level six feet, till it met the slope. This platform, spiked to timbers bolted to the rock, carried a small fixed derrick.

As the foreman shouted, "All right!" Macbride threw down a light guide rope which hung from the bottom of a two-chambered sack, stuffed thickly with coarse hair and wool. In each chamber a can of glycerine could be sent down securely. The upper edge of the sack was fastened to stout cords which joined and ran through pulley blocks fixed to the derrick. These blocks had such a hold on the rope that the sack would not descend of its own weight.

Lying face downward, Macbride let the sack of glycerine slowly down, while the foreman kept the guiding cord taut. No man, unaccustomed to great heights, could lie out, front down, on that platform without being tempted to go head first over.

"Hello!" called Macbride, when the foreman had taken the explosive from the sack.

"Hello yourself."

"Is work stopped for the day?"

"No, I guess not. D'you think it's going to clear, Mac?"

"Yes. Wind's getting colder up here. I s'pose you don't feel it down there."

"Not a breath. If it clears we'll start, if there's only a quarter day to be made."

"All right. I'll stop up here."

"Got your dinner, daddy?" called the engineman, Macbride's eldest son.

"Yes. All right, Tommy."

Then Macbride, who was usually called "Daddy Macbride" or "the old man," hauled up his ropes and his sack, covered them with a small tarpaulin, and ascended the slope.

His path was for fifty yards over smooth rock, always swept clear of snow by the winds of that table-land. The rain, not yet freezing as it fell, danced, shivered, flew forward in spray, and running down against the wind, poured over the precipice and the platform he had left.

In places a few scales of ice had formed on the slope. It had not yet absorbed much heat from the rain, which, had it been of a little lower temperature, would have formed a sheet of ice there.

The slope's upper edge terminated in a flat of land covered with broken stone and snow. There a shanty had been built for Macbride's accommodation. It contained a cook-stove, a table, and a chair. The magazine, containing a ton of nitroglycerine, stood about sixty yards back from the shanty.

About eleven o'clock the increasing wind had shifted to straight from the north. The rain dwindled to a drizzle, and froze as it fell. By half-past twelve the air was clear, and a bitterly cold afternoon in prospect. The gale increased in strength till after the steam whistle told Macbride that work had been resumed.

Then the wind, having reached its height, became steady. At four o'clock, when "toots for glycerine—two cans" sounded, the thermometer stood at two degrees above zero. When Macbride, with two cans of glycerine in his hands, reached the upper edge of the slope, he saw it was a sheet of ice all the way down.

Macbride, a slow, sure man, doggedly devoted to the interests of his employer, knew Lobb's anxiety to push the work. The thought that he should not risk the descent never entered his mind.

Three hundred and forty men would, he knew, be dillydallying till they should hear his call, "Look out for glycerine!" Then they would run for shelter. Meantime they would be casting glances upward to his platform, listening for his voice, and "fooling away time" in a way that Macbride abhorred.

He was at once a cautious man, and very confident that his caution would bring him safely through whatever it allowed him to undertake. But he was one of the slowest-witted men I ever knew, though a man of very good sense.

When he devised a plan it was usually a sound plan, but he needed a great deal of time for the devising, and if he were hurried, he could not plan anything. For this very emergency he had prepared long before, and it did not now occur to him that the fixture would not serve him well.

It consisted of a light rope fastened to his derrick, and hauled tight to a post planted at the slope's upper edge. This rope sagged in the middle to within a foot of the face of the slope. At the ends it was four feet high. Throughout its whole length it was now covered with ice.

Laying his cans cautiously down, Macbride shook the rope violently. The ice flew from it in a thousand pieces. Some stopped on the platform : but most slid clear over the edge and down among the men below.

The old man next stepped on the slope, holding the rope in his right hand. He went down fifteen feet without slipping, and came back reassured. Still he did not venture without more thinking.

Unfortunately his mind dwelt much upon how the waiting men must be wasting time, and little on the danger to which his descent might submit them. Old

John felt that he himself would probably be blown to atoms if he should drop a can. But that the can might slip on the precipice, to explode on striking below, did not occur to him. His own risk, taken in way of duty, was the only risk present to this slow-witted laboring man.

Placing one can under his right arm, and carrying the other in his left hand, Macbride, with the rope in his right hand, went cautiously about five yards when the thought of what would happen if he should slip brought him to a stand-still.

If he clutched the rope to save himself, the can under his right arm would probably fall !

He fancied his son the engineman hearing the explosion and coming up from below to look for the pieces of him, as he himself had looked for the pieces of Bigras and Burns.

"I'll put one can down and come back for it," thought Macbride.

Slowly bending he put down the can in his left hand. It had barely touched the ice when he doubted that it would stand. Very cautiously he loosened his grasp. The can instantly slipped.

He clutched for and seized it, but let go the rope, slipped, and was flat on his back in a moment. By instinct he hitched up both cans on his breast so that neither experienced concussion. While falling he had a flash of expectation that he would, next instant, be

blown to pieces. Stupefied with wonder and thankfulness at having come off so well, he lay on his back tightly grasping the terrible cans.

His rough frieze pea-jacket held him from slipping. After some reflection he shifted the cans to his lap and attempted to sit up.

It is not easy to raise one's self from lying flat on the floor without the aid of one's hands, but after some struggling the old man contrived to make use of his elbows and rose to a sitting position.

Then he found that his oiled canvas trousers had not enough hold on the ice to keep him from sliding. He slowly slipped down a foot before he stopped himself by digging his iron-shod heels into the thick scale of ice. Then he looked around.

From the deep gulf before him came faintly the click of striking hammers, the ring of ball-drills, the rattle of carts, the shouting of drivers, the puffing of the pumping engine driven by his son. At that moment the "toots for glycerine" sounded again.

Macbride shouted in reply, but the wind blew so fiercely into his face that he knew his call could not be heard below. Above his head the rope hung, swaying slightly. He could touch it with his right hand when he shifted both cans to his left arm. But it sagged too easily to give him much aid in rising. Nevertheless, he was almost on his feet when he thought the cans were slipping from his grasp.

To save them he threw his right hand across his body, slipped with the motion, and came down again.

Once more he saved himself, sat up, and wondered what to do. It occurred to him that the cans might stand on the ice beside him. But the sounds from the thronged pit impressed him with a strong sense of what would ensue if a can should slip down.

He thought, "If I put down a can and try to seize the rope it might start just when I'd let go, and I mightn't be quick enough to grab it again." The full horror of the situation was now upon his mind.

A panic came over him. It seemed to him he could not hold the cans securely enough while sitting up, so he lay back. Then he fancied the dreadful packages were less firmly in his arms than before.

But he lay still. He was afraid to try to sit up, lest in the effort he should drop a can, and be either instantly killed himself, or suffer the anguish of seeing it slide down to mangle men in heaps about his son.

The keen wind blew up Macbride's trouser-legs and under his coat. It searched his body. He had begun to suffer from the cold. Still he resolutely held the cans on his stomach, clasping them with his forearms crossed. He would freeze there, he said to himself, rather than make another risky move.

At the thought that he might take off his boots, and walk down the slope in his stocking feet, the old man ventured to sit up again. It was not easy to rise. His

frieze coat had frozen to the ice a little. But he pulled it loose with a wrench of his shoulders and sat up.

Then he found he could not pull off his boots without the use of his hands, and he dared not attempt the action lest a can should fall.

"I'm a dead man," he thought. "The men will leave the pit by six at latest. But the pumping engine runs till eight, and my Tom will be there till then. By that I'll be a corpse—froze stiff. Well, the boys will take care of the old woman. I'm doin' my duty, anyhow. God'll mind that."

This reflection gave the grim old laborer a sort of pleasure. It revived his heart.

"Well, I ain't dead yet by a good bit," said he. "Mebby God's on'y trying me. He's fetched me clear till now, and I guess he will this time too, if I do my best to help myself."

So he set about thinking again.

Then it occurred to him that a can, if started fairly, might be stopped by the tarpaulin on his platform. He managed to get out his jack-knife and let it slide. The knife stopped against the tarpaulin. But Macbride, when he pondered what would happen if the can should swerve aside on its way down, refused to submit the three hundred and forty men to so fearful a risk.

"It's the devil that's tempting me," thought the old man, "but I'll beat him, so I will." As he lay back once more he placed his arms in a new posture.

“When I’m froze stiff lying this way the cans won’t move, that’s sure,” he said, with a satisfactory sense that the devil, of whose personal existence he had no doubt, would be defeated.

The sounds of work came merrily to him. He had a slow fancy of the men trudging home to their suppers, many thankful to be going to their wives and babies. He thought of the women bustling about in the lamp-light to feed their men. He thought of his rough comrades, and their fumbling efforts to please the children at home.

“It ’ud be a poor thing for me to save myself and stop all that,” thought Macbride, and the wholesome sounds of men striking for their daily bread came still more merrily from the chasm.

Suddenly Macbride began to laugh. But it was a very cautious laugh. He chuckled and thought, and chuckled again. Then he laughed at himself, for doubting that his plan was all right.

“It’s porridge I’ve got in my head to-day instead of brains,” said the old man as he sat up. “What sense is in me? I’m nowt but an old fool.”

With that he placed the iron heel of his right foot about ten inches beyond his other heel, then he moved forward his left heel in its turn, and in two minutes was safely on his platform. Of course quick young readers saw long ago that he could easily descend in this manner. But Macbride was a very slow-witted man.

He had been for an hour the prisoner of his own stupidity, as many people are, in some fashion, for their whole lives.

Nevertheless, I hold Macbride to have been a hero, because he had resolved to die rather than make a motion that might have sent death down among those men.

“What did you do next?” I asked, when he had at great length told me the story of his feelings during that bad hour.

“Well, sir, if you’ll not give a whisper to the men I’ll tell you. I just kneeled down on me knees and cried. There was me son and all the boys all safe below, and meself as good as ever, and nobody a copper worse. And to be so near doing so much harm, and yet them to be all striking away like good felleys—sure it was for joy I cried, so it was.”

“Did you call to them?”

“Naw—never a whisper till I seen time would be saved by it. Then says I, ‘Hello. Look out for glycerine.’ If you’d ‘a’ seen ‘em scatter!

“‘Have you been sleeping, Mac,’ yells the foreman.

“‘Ay, and dreamin’,’ say I to myself, but I gev him no answer, and there’s nobody but yourself, sir, knows the truth to this day.”

THE LOST "YVONNE"

"STEAMER
'King Philip,' McDowell,
Liverpool, mdse.
and fifty-three
cabin passengers,
arrived at 7 P. M.
yesterday. Fine
weather, with
moderate westerly
winds throughout



passage. Reports picked up sixth day out canvas-covered canoe 'Yvonne,' built by Higgins & Co., Boston. Found a 'sweater' and silver Waltham watch, No. 2,267,120, in 'Yvonne.' Owner supposed lost."

This is an extract from the shipping news published by a Boston paper one morning last August. My attention was called to it by a young man who sat beside me on a train coming into town from Riverside. He put his thumb on the place and handed me the paper with an excited gesture.

"*My* canoe—*my* watch—*my* sweater!" he said.

"Been afloat three weeks to-day. I must go down to the 'King Philip' and claim my property."

"Floated away by a rising tide from some place where you had drawn the canoe up, I suppose," said I.

"No. Haven't you heard how I lost my canoe? I've told so many people about it that I thought everybody in West Newton knew. But I was forgetting; you're almost a stranger there. Well, the 'Yvonne' was blown out to sea, and I with her."

"You don't say so! How did you manage to get ashore without her?"

"That's the story. I'll tell you all about it. There's time enough before we get to Boston."

Three weeks ago to-day I got into the "Yvonne" at Kennebunkport and paddled out beyond the pier to sea. The weather was fine and the sea calm. There wasn't a curl on the water, nothing but the long ocean swell. Still I didn't feel quite comfortable out there. Were you ever at sea in a canoe? No?

Well, perhaps you can imagine how the *size* of the water affected me. I had never before been out in a canoe on anything wider than the Charles between Riverside and Waltham. It wasn't that I felt in danger of capsizing or being unable to get back to land; but an oppressive sense of the enormous spread of the sea grew on me as I knelt in my cockle-shell away out there, with my head only three feet or so from the billows.

There was no island on the offing ; nothing but sea and sky and gulls, except the red canoe of a young Englishman named Albert Edward Jones, who had gone out from Kennebunkport half an hour or so before I did.

We called him "Wales" Jones, and I must say that a more unsociable chap than he seemed I never came across. I suspect now that nothing worse than shyness was the matter with him.

All day long he was paddling, generally out at sea, and certainly he was a wonderful hand in a canoe. Often he would stay out in a wind that sent bigger surf ashore than most of the bathers liked, and in he would come, fairly sliding along on the crest of some curling wave that would welter around his canoe near the pier so that you'd be sure he must go down before reaching quiet water in the river.

I thought him foolhardy, though I could appreciate his great skill with the paddle. Most of the summer people regarded him as demented to run such risks.

Well, it was the wish to practise on big water and the hope to pick up some of Wales' knack that took me out into the open that day. I said to myself: "I'll go out first in a calm, and afterward in a gentle breeze, and after that in one not quite so gentle ; and if I don't get drowned, I'll gradually learn how to manage a canoe like Wales."

But the sea is treacherous ; you don't catch me

fooling with it any more on the calculation that it will stay just so.

As I withstood my nervous feeling it nearly disappeared, and I paddled out perhaps a mile. The weather was perfectly clear ; there was just a breath of air from the south at first. This died away after a while ; the afternoon sun beat fiercely down, and yet I sat so close to the cool water that I was not uncomfortably hot.

I was paddling in "trunks," with my well-tanned arms and shins bare. My sweater and my watch were in the stern, for I knelt before the second thwart.

Instead of coming toward me, as any American fellow would have done on seeing me, Wales stood farther out, and I could barely make out the gleam of his red canoe through the heat spirals and the faint mist that cling close to the sea on a hot, calm day. When I became convinced that he either didn't see me or wouldn't come in for a chat, I began to think of turning back to shore.

In fact, I did return, but I still had plenty of daylight ahead of me ; the shore seemed not more than a mile away, and I just sat there without paddling and let her swing on the billows.

I suppose I must have fallen into a sort of dream. Though I did not sleep nor close my eyes, I wasn't taking notice of anything. How long this lasted I can't say, but I was suddenly roused by a faint shout from

seaward. At that I turned to see "Wales" Jones coming in at a great pace.

His double-bladed paddle was going like the arms of an old-fashioned windmill. He was within a quarter of a mile or so of me, and I could make out that he was down on one knee, with the other leg thrust out in front of him—his favorite attitude for putting on all steam.

I got it into my head that he was "hitting it up," as he calls speeding, by way of showing me his superior pace ; but pretty soon he rose up to his feet, pointed to shore with his paddle, and shouted some words that I couldn't make out.

There was no mistaking the gesture, though. I looked ashore to see the sky blackening with the coming of a squall.

Well, sir, in about one minute, I guess, there was no shore to be seen. It had been blotted out. A front of rain and wind came fairly shrieking over the water. I knew there was no use trying to paddle or control the 'Yvonne' ; the best thing I could do was to lie down, and so give her my body for low ballast.

As I stretched myself out in the bottom, the squall broke over me with a fury that passed almost as quickly as it came. It was just as though some vast mouth had opened, given one long, mighty puff, and closed again.

Little more sea had risen than would come on a big pond with such a sudden gale. But where was

Wales? I looked back as I turned toward shore. In the distance I saw the squall racing away ; I was confident that it had fled past where I had seen the Englishman, yet not a glimpse of his red canoe did I catch.

Before I had fairly searched the seaward horizon the wind came up of which the squall had been a forerunner. It was not what you'd call a great wind, but from the first I could feel that it was going to be a steady and a rising wind. It blew straight from shore, and I put in my paddle with wonder whether I had strength to make head against it long enough to save myself from being blown out to sea.

I was in good condition, for I had been paddling on the Riverside reach six or eight miles almost every day since April, but pretty soon I began to see that I could not make the shore.

The wind was no gale, you understand, but it was dead against me, and its pressure was as steady as a jack-screw's. The "Yvonne" is one of these "girling" canoes, made on the bark canoe model, and too high in the sides and ends for work in wind. Perhaps you know how hard it is to keep a canoe of that model straight into the wind's eye?

Well then, you can fancy how she yawed—fell off first to this side, and then when I corrected her, to the other—as her nose caught the wind on coming up over wave after wave.

The sea was rising. It was not high, it was not yet

dangerous. I was under no fear of capsizing or being swamped; my fear was only that I could not make head against wave and wind. Not to do so meant being blown out to sea.

I could, I soon saw, get through the water more quickly by steering half across seas instead of dead against them, but I was sure the 'Yvonne' drifted side-wise when I gave her quarter at all to the breeze. Those wide-bottomed canoes have no such hold on the water as a Peterboro or a Rob Roy. Of course I could gain nothing by running quickly at an angle to the shore if I were drifting out from it at the same time, so I doggedly stuck to my straight-at-the-wind paddling.

My one hope was that some yacht or catboat would come to me before my strength went; but not a vestige of canvas could I see except the sprit-sail of some boat running to and fro in the river inside the Kennebunkport pier. I could see many people ashore, like puppets moving about, but I well knew that they were so accustomed to the sight of Wales at sea that they would never imagine me to be in danger in waves much smaller than the Englishman played with.

Sea and wind gradually rose till I doubted whether I was gaining an inch. Little white caps began to break near me, and greater ones in the northern and southern distances. If waves with formidable crests arose I was sure they would pour over the 'Yvonne's' sides.

All the time I was thinking of the fate of Wales, fancying how his body was drifting down and down far behind me, and imagining the same ending for myself. Twice I had turned to glance behind without making out his low-sided red canoe, so I was the more convinced she had been rolled upside down in the squall.

Hello ! is this Brighton Station ? I shall have to hurry up with the story. Well, I suppose I struggled in that situation for three quarters of an hour without gaining fifty yards. All the time the waves were combing up higher till the crests ran past me in a swirl of bubbles. As the boys say, I thought my name was Dennis ; and then I heard a distinct "Ahoy, there !"

I turned to the north to see Wales not more than two hundred yards away. He was easily making head against the sea though not running into the eye of the wind, but half across seas. I never saw anything prettier.

Up he would climb lightly ; on the crest his bow hovered in a boil of white water which he took always on his quarter with a movement that seemed to tip his canoe away from the crest ; then out would shoot the red witch of a Peterboro till half her length seemed to glisten clear of water, and down she went with the careless sweep of a gull. But Wales was not making toward me. His course was at an angle away from mine, and from his peculiar swing it was plain that he was in a state of high satisfaction,

"Ahoy, there!" he shouted again.

"Ahoy!" I answered.

"Are you all right?"

"No, all wrong."

"That so? Then I'll come to you."

With one stroke of his long paddle he turned to the left in the trough, rose, taking the next crest on his north quarter, and in a few minutes was close alongside.

"Are you making headway?" he asked me.

I told him I thought not.

"Let me see," said he, and kept even pace with me for a minute.

"No, you're losing," he said. "I wondered why I was overhauling you so fast. Of course she drifts if you give the wind her quarter. It's a bad scrape. Are you doing all you can?"

"Every pound," I said.

"Well, what are you going to do about it?"

"Nothing to do. I might as well let her drift, but for the shame of giving up so."

"Gammon," he said, and laughed.

I thought this rather heartless, but said nothing.

"I might get ashore and send out a catboat," he said doubtfully.

"I wish to goodness you would then," I answered.

"But then no catboat might be ready. Or it might miss you. No; one of us must lose his canoe."

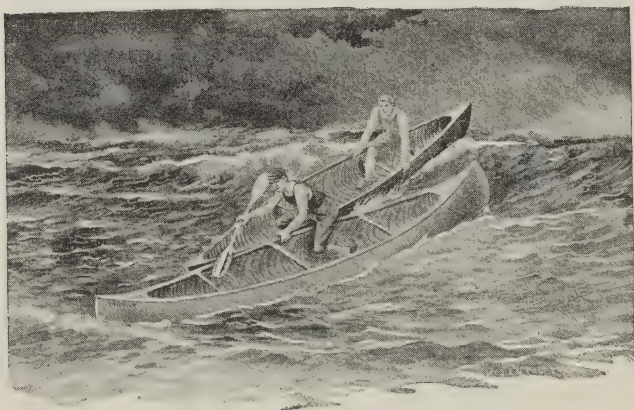
"That's pretty clear—and myself too," said I.

"Gammon! The question is shall I get in with you or you get in with me?"

"Gracious, you can't change into my canoe in this sea! And your canoe won't carry us both."

"She won't, eh?" he said, as if annoyed.

I suppose my remark decided him, for he was



extremely proud of his canoe. Next instant he ran her bow close alongside of the "Yvonne," and spoke with an air of settling the whole matter.

"Now do exactly what I say. When my canoe touches the side of yours grab it and hold the two—both rails, mind—hold them together. Then rise up quickly, keep both hands on the two edges—the canoes will steady one another that way—then step right into my bow in front of the forward thwart. You under-

stand? All right then. The moment you're on your knees in my canoe let yours go, and we'll daddle this old sea yet!" he concluded, with a queer burst of exultation.

On going up the next crest I did exactly as he said. The "Yvonne" took the curl on her quarter, and sheltered his red canoe so perfectly that she didn't ship a dipperful. As I knelt, Wales shifted back to his canoe's stern and cried, "Let go!"

Next instant we were rising up a wave. My Englishman was so clever that he somehow shouldered off that crest without wetting me at all, and so we went on up and down, up and down, every wave threatening to swamp us, and every crest thrust away as by a sort of miracle.

After my nerves had got a little used to this sort of thing—mind you, we hadn't more than six inches of free board, and but for his dexterous tipping her away from the crests any one of them would have poured over—after I had begun to feel a bit easy, I said:

"Hang it all, I forgot my watch and sweater."

"Well, I don't think we can turn back safely," he said, as if he seriously thought of doing so.

"Turn back! Not for all the watches at Waltham and all the sweaters in America," I said.

Well, we're almost at Huntington Avenue. There's nothing more to tell, except that we got into the lee of

the shore in half an hour, and landed all right. When we did so I turned to Wales—I was pretty grateful, you may be sure—and I said, holding out my hand: "You've saved my life. I thank you from the bottom of my heart." What do you suppose he answered?

"I can't imagine. What was it?"

Simply "Gammon!" Then he went off alone to his hotel, and I've never seen him from that moment.

“DORINDA”

“PLEASE give me a small vial of chloroform, enough for a cat,” said Mrs. Lister to the proprietor of the pharmacy in East Newburg, a suburb of Boston.

“That’s the way to deal with cats,” said he, turning to his shelves for the anæsthetic. “It’s just dreadful how some of these poor things suffer when the families go away for the summer !”

“If I could take ours with me—but——”

“All the way to Germany and back? Well, I guess not, Mrs. Lister.”

“My son couldn’t be bothered with her. Henry’s going to take his holiday in California, you know. And what does any young man care about a cat?”

“I think I see Henry Lister lugging a cat ’round with him ’cross the continent !” said the druggist with some derision. “But there’s Mr. Lister.” He almost winked at the absurdity of this suggestion.

“My husband is going to lodge in Boston all summer—he is so busy he can’t get away at all. No, I must give it chloroform ; there is no other way. I couldn’t bear to think of it prowling around without any home.”

"Certainly not, Mrs. Lister, certainly not," said the druggist, really wondering a little at the soft-heartedness of Mrs. Lister, whose *rôle* was that of the strong-minded woman.

It was nearly nine o'clock of an evening of late June, when she left the pharmacy. As she walked up the long hill of East Newburg with the chloroform in her pocket, her heart was sore with sorrow for the cat and herself. Dorinda had been in the family for three years. A sense of meditating something uncomfortably like murder oppressed Mrs. Lister. Yet no one, she was sure, except herself, loved Dorinda enough to care whether she starved in homelessness, fell a victim to dogs, went wild in trying to live by bird-catching in the chestnut woods about the Newburgs, perished by some boy's gun, or died by her mistress' hand. But, oh, the pity of it, that she must thus save Dorinda from the woes of desertion !

It was not fairly her duty, thought Mrs. Lister. Her husband or her son should have had forethought of this dark deed and, in mercy to her, proposed to undertake it. It could be no grief to them, both so impassive and reserved. But she had never thought of asking either of them to do it ; that would be to confess herself sentimental, and she prided herself on being a firm character.

As she walked over her dewy lawn in the faint moonlight, almost ready to forsake her European trip for

Dorinda's sake, the doomed animal lay in her husband's lap. He was sitting in the hammock swung on the wide side-piazza, stroking Dorinda gently and looking out over the trees that lay down the hill toward the valley of the Charles River, its spaces flooded with vague moonshine and punctuated with electric lamps.

Mr. Lister had quite forgotten that he was stroking the cat, for he was thinking, in an absent, heart-hungry way, of the years when he and his wife had not yet ceased from demonstrative affection for one another. Though business usually so absorbed him, and the “Woman's Club” so occupied her, how lonesome would he find the long months alone in Boston lodgings, miles away from this dear, familiar scene ! It seemed particularly hard that his wife should have spent this last evening before the summer break-up at church, where a special meeting of the “Ladies' General Culture Club” was being held to receive her belated report on the application of electricity to Mr. Edward Atkinson's cooker. But Mr. Lister had never thought of asking her to forego that duty.

As he heard his wife's steps on the gravel path, he put Dorinda softly down on the piazza floor ; Elvira would, of course, be contemptuous if she caught him petting a cat. Dorinda trotted softly, tail up, to meet her mistress. But Mrs. Lister could not bear to take the cat up in her arms, the confidence of the creature made her feel herself to be a treacherous hypocrite.

It was so difficult for her to keep back her tears that her face, as she opened the wire front door and came into the glare of the hall electric light, looked hard and set to her husband, who had risen and come around the corner to greet her.

"Well, Elvira, how did the meeting go off?" he said, but she, not daring to trust herself to reply, walked upstairs and turned into her study. Mr. Lister went back to the hammock with a sigh. It was shocking that his wife should have "woman's work" even yet to do; but that must be so, judging from the sharp snick of her study door.

Dorinda had followed her mistress upstairs, and Mr. Lister, hearing the cat meow, quite pitied the neglected creature. He was too loyal to his wife to let his thought that she was very hard-hearted formulate itself clearly. For a few minutes Dorinda stood meowing outside the study door, while Mrs. Lister put the chloroform, with a gesture of loathing, into a closed box on her pigeon-holed desk. As she listened to Dorinda's voice there was a look of pity and horror in her face that would have amazed most of her emancipating sisterhood.

"I want to come in, for I love you dearly," said the long-drawn meows very plainly.

Mrs. Lister, putting her hands to her ears in a wild way, looked desperately at two corded trunks, and a third one that lay open for the last things to be packed

in at break of day. When she took her hands from her ears, she no longer heard the cat.

Dorinda, losing patience, had walked along the hall, sidling with waving tail into the open door of a room where sat a tall, sunburned youth studying the railway map of California. Feeling the cat against his legs, he stuck a black-headed pin into the map to mark his point, stooped and lifted Dorinda to his lap, which the desk concealed. Then, stroking Dorinda with his big brown right hand, he resumed his study by aid of the left.

Half an hour later, when he heard his father coming upstairs, Henry softly moved to be sure that Dorinda was concealed, and peered into guide books so intently that his father said never a word of good-night to disturb him.

How this family of three people had come to such a condition that no one of them had ever seen another caressing Dorinda would be a long tale. True, they naturally admired reserve, but the habit of suppressing signs of affectionate emotion had grown to a degree which would have shocked the father had he foreseen it when his early preoccupation with business threw his wife back upon herself. It had grown to a degree which she had never forecast when she resolutely threw her energies into "woman's work."

Young Henry remembered with poignancy the days when his father and mother—always separately—had been wont to cuddle him, as a little boy. Now—for

youth is imitative and Harvard a forcing house of self-sufficiency—he had grown into simulated as well as real preoccupation, isolation, and self-dependence. They lived, these three, on terms of undoubting good-will, but never a kiss, nor a cordial, emotional expression, nor a good cry together, comforted the hunger of their hearts for demonstrative love.

It was very late that night when Mrs. Lister, with the chloroform in her hand, softly opened the hall door of her study and peered out, waiting for Dorinda to come. Now she was nerved for the sad deed. She had delayed long, to be sure that her husband and son were sleeping. But now she must do it; in the morning there would be no time for the tragedy and burial. Mrs. Lister had a clear vision of the very spot in the big flower-bed where she meant, with her garden spade, to inter Dorinda's piteous remains by the light of the moon.

As she saw nothing of the cat, she cautiously opened the door between her study and her bedroom. There lay her husband apparently asleep, really very wide awake, for he had been long lying and looking out of the open window at the valley and the lights of the Charles. He was sorer at heart now, thinking how his wife maintained her isolation to the last moment before their long parting. But he closed his eyes, fearing she should suspect him of silly sentimentality, as she turned on a small electric lamp and looked into his face.

“How can he be so callous as to sleep so in view of the morrow?” thought she bitterly, smothering a sigh.

Peeping furtively at his wife as she looked for the cat, Mr. Lister saw the chloroform vial and a sponge in her hand.

“What can she be up to?” thought he; “and what on earth is she looking for?”

When she turned off the electric lamp, softly closed her study door, struck a match, lit a wax candle, and went downstairs, Mr. Lister quietly rose, opened the door into the upper hall, and stood looking over the balusters.

“Pussy, pussy, pussy,” he could hear his wife whispering. What could she want pussy for?

He heard her go through the drawing room, the library, the dining room, still faintly whispering, “Puss-sy, puss-sy.” He heard her go out into the kitchen parts, where she stayed long enough to have searched every pantry and store room. Back she came, whispering, “Pussy, pussy,” more loudly, and down into the cellar she went for quite a long visit. Then, still whispering for Dorinda, she ascended, opened the front doors, and went out upon the piazza, where her husband now believed the cat must be.

He hastily half dressed himself, and went downstairs. The truth had flashed on him. She was about to chloroform the cat! With a strange, unusual pity for his wife, whose weakness he suddenly surmised, and

anger at her project, he met her coming up the front steps from her bewildered tour of the flower garden.

"What's the trouble, Elvira?"

"I don't think I understand you, George."

"Well, I beg your pardon if I'm wrong, but I thought you were looking for Dorinda."

"So I have been."

"Not to chloroform her, surely! I see the bottle in your hand."

"Yes," in a hard voice. "It's mere humanity to save her from homelessness."

"Humanity! Why, Elvira, hadn't you better chloroform me? You'd be cruel enough to leave me without even the cat!"

"Cruel to you—I don't understand you, George. You are going to live in Boston."

"Well, can't there be any cruelty to any one living in Boston? You don't suppose I'm going without the cat?"

"You, George?"

"Yes; I'm fond of that cat," he said doggedly. "Laugh at me if you like; I am. She's all I shall have when you and Henry go."

"Well, George Lister!" She laid her left hand on his arm, looked hard at him, and almost began to cry in a way that quite shamed them both. But soon she pulled herself together and spoke: "Well, George, you certainly do amaze me. Why, I thought you just

hated Dorinda. I often thought how hard you were when pussy would go rubbing against your chair or your legs and you wouldn't ever stoop to pick her up, or even caress her."

"So did I."

"What?"

"I thought the same of you."

"But I always took her up when you were not there to feel like laughing at me."

"So did I, when you weren't there, Elvira."

"So you were fond of Dorinda and didn't want me to know it, George?"

"Yes, I guess we've both been making a big mistake, Elvira."

"Why, George, didn't you ever suspect that I took Dorinda as a kitten because I just had to have something that would let me pet it, after Henry got too big?"

"Elvira—dear—" the man paused long. "Do you remember the times when we were young together?" he whispered.

"George—" he could scarcely hear her. "And yet we've grown apart—you gradually got so busy."

"Yes, Elvira, it was all my fault; I see it now."

"No, for I took up the 'Work,'" she said, shamed by his magnanimity.

They went arm in arm to the hammock, and sat there awhile afraid of their emotion.

"It's so strange," said Mrs. Lister in an eerie tone, and with a slight shiver. "It seems almost as if she had suspected what was in my mind, and had gone away."

"It makes me feel superstitious too, Elvira. But let's look around for her together."

So they searched the grounds in the moonlight with recovered reserve, under the fear that some wakeful neighbor might look out on them engaged in that piece of strange sentimentalism. Then they searched the cellar, the ground floor, the bedroom floor, all in vain.

"She can't be upstairs in the servants' floor," said Mrs. Lister.

"No, I had her after the girls went to bed early, for they have to be up before daylight to start you, 'Viry. Fact is, I was stroking Dorinda in my lap when you came across the lawn."

"You were, George? And you were ashamed to let me know it!"

"And you to pick her up when she ran to you. Beats all how blind we've been about that cat. But where can she be?"

"Do you suppose she could be in Henry's room?"

"Oh, no. He'd be sure to drive her out. Henry never even looks friendly at her."

"But she might have gone in and curled up asleep somewhere, so he didn't notice her."

"Well, maybe. Let's peep in."

Mrs. Lister shaded her candle with one hand, while her husband gently opened the door. On the bed, nearly on his back, lay the young athlete, with only a sheet over him in the warm June night. One strong forearm, half-bared from the wrist, and sun-browned with much boating, lay outstretched along the pillows. Its corded muscles made a pillow for Dorinda. She had curled herself on the arm as if satisfied that it would never move to her hurt, and even yet she did not seem disturbed.

As the parents approached the bed, on opposite sides, Henry drew a short breath and half turned on his side, but without changing the position of his right arm. Still Dorinda, though she lifted her head and looked at the in-comers, did not move. Instead, she snuggled down and began to purr softly, seemingly pleased to be seen on such good terms with the young giant. The picture moved the parents deeply. Henry's brown face wore the ineffable half-smile of his early boyhood. So he had looked often when his father let him go to sleep in his arms before the fire. So he had looked often, vaguely thought the mother, when she crooned the song after lulling him. Now the purring of the cat seemed to penetrate his dream with a sense of voiced affection. And his father and mother felt sorely how they had grown, during four or five years, to think of him as really self-sufficient, impassive, hard-headed, needing no clear expressions of love.

Mrs. Lister reached out her hand and stroked the cat. Still Henry did not waken. They were half afraid to rouse him ; he would be so vexed at the discovery of his chumming with Dorinda.

As Mrs. Lister touched the blue ribbon around the cat's neck, she noticed that a long cord was tied to it, and with much amazement, motioned to her husband to behold that the cord was tied to the brass bedstead. Just then Henry woke, and Mrs. Lister lifted the cat in her arms. The youth sat up, clutching at the open neck of his nightshirt, and staring with wonder at his parents.

As he saw the cat in his mother's arms, a rush of blood went over his brown face and white upper forehead. Then he looked sheepish. Then he looked deeply offended. But he did not speak. His parents hardly dared address him.

"You see, Henry, we were just looking around for the cat, that's all," said Mrs. Lister awkwardly.

"Yes, mother. Well, you've found her."

"Your mother feels sorry to be leaving the cat, you see, Henry. She was going to chloroform her," said Mr. Lister ; "but I——"

"Well, I guess not !" said Henry sharply. "Chloroform Dorinda ! Why mother !"

"I was afraid she would be homeless, Henry, and so in mercy——"

"Homeless ! Not much. Why she's going——"

“It’s all right, Henry, after all,” the mother hastily interposed. “Your father’s going to keep her in Boston with him.”

“In Boston? The idea! Why father couldn’t; she’d starve. How could father be bothered? I’m going to take Dorinda with me.”

“You, Henry—to California and back? How could you possibly do it?”

“Why, in a covered basket, of course. That’s why I tied her up, don’t you see, for fear she’d go away somewhere in the morning so I couldn’t find her. You couldn’t expect father to worry himself taking care of a cat, mother.”

“But father wants to, Henry. That was his plan before he knew mine.”

Henry looked at his father with staring wonder.

“It’s so, Henry,” said Mr. Lister defensively. “Why, hang it all, what are you surprised about? S’pose I’m not fond of the cat? Why, she’ll be the only home thing I shall have. I’ve got to have her, don’t you understand?”

Henry held out one big hand to his father and the other to his mother. Without a word the two sat down on opposite sides of the bed and looked into a face they had not seen so happily moved for five or six years. The mother, holding the cat out in her hands, pushed its head affectionately against Henry’s brown neck. Then she leaned forward and kissed him, while the

father held Henry's hand tightly in both his and said nothing.

"Well, father," said Henry after a long pause, "of course a fellow knows his father is just as good and kind, you know—and everything—letting a fellow go to California and all that ; but—why, I never thought you would miss us that way, father, and Dorinda too."

Perhaps they could not have talked in daylight nor by electric light as they proceeded to do ; but by the dim light of the candle they could whisper from their hearts. All this time Dorinda purred loudly in the short pauses, and often the hands met in stroking her.

"We've all been too reserved ; I have been freezing with it," said Mrs. Lister near the last.

"And we are going to separate just as we find ourselves warm again," said the husband.

"Say we don't," said Henry. "I don't care a cent about old California. Only I thought father didn't wish—oh, I say, father, let's—you and I—go down to the beach. You can run up and down every day—Marblehead, or Beverly, or somewhere or 'nother. Then we'll be together with Dorinda. And mother needn't stay away all the fall."

"I wish I need not go," said Mrs. Lister. "I don't want to now. I wish the company would take back my ticket."

"Elvira, would you stay? What do I care about a hundred dollars or so? Pooh! Let it go if the com-

pany won't take the ticket. Why, Henry's going to stay too ! We'll take a place at Nahant. Well, if we don't have the jolliest old summer !”

“Oh, you blessed Dorinda !” exclaimed Mrs. Lister, pressing the cat to her heart.

“It was the cat,” cried Henry, sing-song ; “it was the cat, the blessed, blessed cat.”

OVER THE FALLS

TO cross the Niagara River, opposite the Canadian village of Chippewa, in a skiff for the first time, is an experience one does not lightly forget.

The falls, two miles down stream, seem much nearer. The great width of the river tends to shrink their apparent distance ; the persistent roar of the cataract, forcing one's voice to strong effort in speaking, appears to originate very close by.

Having arrived at Chippewa one June evening, by mistake twenty-four hours sooner than my business required, I determined to treat myself to a day's trolling, and with this object, engaged the help of Charley Pelton, a fine, clear-eyed, handsome, powerful man of about thirty, who was recommended to me as the best boatman in the place.

Bright and early next morning we shot away from his boat-house under the Chippewa bridge, down the dirty, sluggish Chippewa Creek perhaps a third of a mile, to the junction of its dull gray water with the clear green Niagara tide. Here were two channels leading to the main river around an island that Pelton called "The Hog's-back."

The lower channel was, he said, the natural mouth of the creek ; the upper channel, or "gap," had been cut to accomodate tugs and barges which had once plied regularly between Buffalo and the tumble-down Canadian hamlet. As we went out of the gap, I noticed the strong pull of the current, which broke in "riffles" along the outer edge of the "Hog's-back."

"It must have been pretty hard for a tug to take a long tow in here," I remarked.

"You may well say that," he answered. "This was an exciting point. I've seen——"

I thought he was going to tell a story, but here the work occupied all his breath and attention. He took me from current to eddy, and from eddy to current, up the Canadian shore a mile or more, and then shot by a neat diagonal easily across to Navy Island.

During the morning, Pelton showed me very fair sport, and after luncheon on Navy Island, we were in excellent humor for a confidential talk. So we fell into a long chat about the dangers of the river, which he concluded with this story :

Yes, I've got some cause to tremble when I look at that cloud of spray and listen to that roar, for I was through them rapids once ! No, not over the Falls, of course ! It's not likely I'd 'a' been here to tell, if I'd gone over. But I was 'most over, and I saw him that I loved best in the world swept away to destruction. But

I'd better begin at the beginning. I ain't used to telling the story; I don't know as I ever did tell it right through either, because I never talked about it to a stranger afore.

They told you, I was the best boatman round here, did they? Well, if you had asked them six years ago, they'd have told you my brother Frank was. And they'd have told you the truth. He was six years younger than me, and I was only twenty-five then, but he was far the best man.

My! I was fond of that boy—and proud! You see I had give him his lessons in 'most every kind of manliness that he could do. I mind taking him in swimming when he wasn't more than a toddling baby, and me not much bigger, seems now. Rowing—I can't mind when my hands weren't used to oars, but I mind well enough teaching him when he wasn't more than four years old. What a brave baby he was, never hanging back, but always trying to do just what he was showed! How quick he got to be handy all round! And what a kind chap! Say, I could go right on all day talking about that little boy.

One day, toward evening, me and Frank was standing on the bridge of the creek, fly-fishing for silver bass, when up come the whistle of a tug from the river.

"That's the 'Mixer,'" says Frank, looking pleased.
"She's got back soon. Mother'll be glad."

You see, mother and Sally and Jane Rolston had

went up to Buffalo a couple of days before, and they was to come back with one of the "Mixer's" barges, the "Mary Starbuck," of Chippewa. Old man Rolston was the skipper of that scow, and his daughter Kitty done the cooking for him and his two hands. He'd agreed to give up his whole cabin to mother and the girls on the way down, if they liked, and him and the men would go aboard one of the other barges.

"It's the 'Mixer,' sure enough," says I, "just coming into the gap. But what on earth is she whistling so *long* for?"

"There must be something wrong!" says Frank.

Without another word, we dropped our poles, ran down under the bridge to where the boats was, and jumped into a skiff just about the size of that there. We pulled for the gap, and pretty soon we could see the "Mixer" coming in, seemingly all right, but still whistling. We couldn't see what there was behind her, as she hid the scows some, and the front scows hid them behind.

As we came racing along, old Capt. Dolby dropped his pull on the whistle and run out to the "Mixer's" bow.

"Quick!" he called. "Go down the old channel and save 'em!"

"Who?" I cried back.

"The 'Mary Starbuck's' broke loose!" he roared.

"Is mother on board?" we asked.

“Yes. Oh, boys, hurry up !”

Maybe you can understand how that boat began to travel. We knowed mother and Sally was drifting down outside the “Hog’s-back,” straight for Niagara Falls !

There was a bunch of people standing together on the “Starbuck.” When they saw us, they separated a little and threw up their hands beckoning. Then I saw they was four women. I had clean forgot all but mother and Sally !

Frank turned his head too, and gave a great gasp as he took in the situation. We could not possibly take more than three of them on the skiff ! There would be big risk in taking more than two by the time we could reach her. To get ashore would need all our strength and wind. We stopped rowing a stroke, thinking of going back for a bigger boat. But what was the use? Before we could work back to the bridge, the “Starbuck” would be over the falls. Some one had ought to be saved ; so we put in big strokes again.

Before we reached the “Mary Starbuck,” she had got into very swift water ; it was smooth, though, for some distance lower. The women were all quiet, except Kitty Rolston ; she was crying and laughing and shrieking by turns—hystericky.

“I knew you’d come, boys,” said mother, trembling, but looking brave enough. She was a pretty heavy

woman. Frank helped her down into the stern of the skiff. Now the "Starbuck" had swung round, and we were on her down-stream side.

"Quick, Sally!" said I.

But Kitty Rolston pushed Sally back. Jane made no move. She was kneeling down and praying. I guess she saw at the start that they couldn't all be saved. How well I mind her white face—something like an angel's it was then—and her voice so sweet and steady!

"O Lord, deliver them!" she was saying over and over again.

I held Kitty back. "Quick, Sally!" I said again.

"Why not let Kitty in first?" said Sally, hanging back.

"We can't take more than two," I told her.

"Yes, we can," says Frank; "we can take three. Jane!"

"Take Kitty," said Jane. "I will stay till you come back."

"We can't come back," said Frank.

"Take Kitty," said Jane again.

There wasn't any time to argue. All this passed in half a minute. Kitty got into the skiff; then Sally. The gunwale was down within three inches of the water then. I didn't think any of us would get ashore.

"Leave go!" I shouted to Frank. Such an agony as there was in that boy's face! He held out his arms to Jane. She came forward swiftly and kissed him.

"The good Lord have thee in his holy keeping," she said. Then he gave an awful groan and I shoved off.

I tell you, it was a terrible thing to leave that girl! Seemed as if we had ought all to stay. Seemed, somehow, as if we were forsaking her cowardly. But we had sense enough to know it was right. She dropped down on her knees again and crossed her arms over her breast and bowed her head.

I looked at mother. She was clutching the gunwale and looking dreadfully white and scared now. Sally held her arm round Kitty Rolston.

Down where we were then the rapids seemed to crash and yell and hold up white arms for us. There was a long, smooth fall and rise like a very easy billow getting into the water as we made for shore. It was a terror how close the big breakers seemed.

Frank pulled the mightiest stroke then that ever a man pulled. Every time he came back his oars bent like a bow, but we had made them ourselves and could trust them. I guess his eyes were never taken off Jane kneeling there on the "Mary Starbuck."

I looked at her pretty often too, when I wasn't looking at the white face of mother. Mother was praying too. "O Lord God, save and deliver them!" She had taken the words of Jane's prayer, and didn't seem, no more than Jane, to be thinking about her own danger.

In a little while I seemed to hear a yell and looked up the river. There was a skiff with the Piniger boys in it—good men they were too, but they were rowing ashore.

“Go out and save her, you cowards!” screamed Frank; but they didn’t dare to.

When we touched the shore there were twenty or thirty people standing on the high bank. They gave a tremendous cheer and hurried to help out mother and the girls. Kitty Rolston fainted dead away, and mother couldn’t stand. I was all of a tremble myself, now that the danger was over. But it wasn’t over.

I was just stepping ashore when Frank said, “Hurry up! shove her out!”

“What do you mean!” I asked.

“I’m going to save Jane,” says he wildly.

“Save Jane!” says I. “Look where the ‘Starbuck’ is!”

She was over the second big pitch, more than quarter of a mile out. There wasn’t the ghost of a hope to save Jane. But the boy was crazy, I suppose, with sorrow for her.

“I can reach her,” he cried, “and run ashore on some of the islands.”

“You’re crazy!” said I, stepping out, never thinking he would really try it. He shoved off. I jumped in after him—somehow I couldn’t bear to have the boy go alone.

Looking away over the trampling breakers, I could now and again see the "Mary Starbuck" tossed and tumbled and flung. Sometimes she would seem to leave the water entirely, and then again she would sink out of sight. How she lived so long I cannot tell. Always Jane knelt, I could see that. I wonder she could keep her senses in the midst of the shrieking and roaring of them cataracts.

We were now right above Cooper's Island, not two hundred yards distant. There was a third and a mightier plunge just before us. Down we went, down, down, till I thought we would never stop falling; then we struck, and the boat was smashed up right there.

The next instant I was fighting to keep my head free from white, foamy crests. I got a glimpse of Frank a few feet away. Even in that wild rush he seemed to be striking out for the "Mary Starbuck." But the torrent tossed him along like a chip.

In less time than it takes to tell it, we were at the divide of the current close to the end of Cooper's Island. By some extraordinary luck we both struck straight through where it forked, and found ourselves in shallow water. I waded ashore and was saved.

But Frank! Of course he was crazy! He ran along the outer shore of the island, stumbling over rocks and fallen tree-trunks, all the time keeping his eyes fixed on the "Mary Starbuck," which was now plunging up and down, a couple of hundred yards

below him. All the time he kept calling, "Jane ! Jane !"

I followed as I could.

Of course Jane could not have heard him above the terrible turmoil of the river, but in a little while she looked up, saw him, and started to her feet. He had at that moment stopped at the foot of the island. Suddenly she stretched out her arms toward him.

He looked once at the roarers before him and again at her reaching arms. Then without further hesitation, he leaped away out into the current and struck out toward the tremendous waves between him and the girl. Jane at that instant threw up her arms with such a motion as I never saw, and fell down like dead on the deck. Next moment a wilder wave rolled tumbling, up over the craft, and she fell to pieces like a thing of shingles. I looked then for Frank. He had disappeared.

I never saw him again, nor a trace of either of them. Their bodies could never be found, though we had the river watched below the falls for many a day.

A HEROINE OF NORMAN'S WOE

ONE windy afternoon of August, two years ago, an observant passenger on the steamer from Boston to Gloucester, who was scanning Briar Island with a field-glass, became interested in two young men ashore. One carried the other on his back. No other figures could be seen on Briar Island. A small tent was pitched on the island's summit.

The head of the carried youth hung on his own right shoulder ; from his legs' limpness he seemed dead, or paralyzed. His arms were grasped in front of the burden-bearer's chest. The backs of both were toward the steamer.

That the carried youth had fallen from some pinnacle of the little island's rough eastern shore was the first surmise of my informant, the observant passenger. He did not readily suspect that the conqueror in a fight was carrying his victim's body up-hill in the broad light of day.

Clearly the burden-bearer was strong, for he ascended the declivity with steady strides, bore his load into the tent, and was lost to sight. It then struck my informant as strange that the young man did not hasten out to signal the steamer for aid.

My informant is a typical Boston man, deliberate, reticent, averse to committing himself, disliking "fuss," unwilling to appear conspicuous. He thought of asking the captain to send a boat ashore ; but he seldom speaks to any one without an introduction. Yet he began to fear that he might become excited enough to do so when he saw the strong youth come out of the tent, gaze straight at the steamer, and still wave no handkerchief nor make any such appeal.

My friend was sure he would, in such a case, commit himself so far as to hail the nearest craft. But what if that craft were a mile distant and rapidly moving away ?

My informant began to wonder if a crime had been committed on that rock, and the more he watched it fade away, the more he feared this was the one reasonable explanation. The youth, momentarily growing dimmer to my friend's view, went back to the tent's opening, peered in, stood half a minute as if held by what he saw, turned, straightened up, and looked around over Massachusetts Bay.

Whitecaps lifted in all directions except under the island's lee. The wind was rising. The steamer rolled considerably in running across seas. Nearly all small sail in sight were making for the nearest ports. Large craft stood far out, with little canvas. Some dories of fishermen were tossing wildly at anchor, but more were seeking shelter.

The observant passenger saw the youth stoop sud-

denly, pick something up and run, apparently with an oar in hand, down the steep of the island's lee. There he disappeared.

Two minutes later some tiny yellow craft shot forth from that lee shore toward the open bay. The little vessel was scarcely visible from the receding steamer. It pointed almost straight against the wind. My informant recognized it as a canoe, for he could see the gleam of the double paddle. Who, except one afraid of his fellow-men ashore, would, thought my informant, face such weather in a canoe, as if to get out to sea beyond Cape Ann, where he might chance to be picked up by some outgoing vessel, beyond reach by telegram or detectives?

The Boston passenger then confided his suspicions to the Boston captain, who looked impassive and said nothing. Feeling that he had "slopped over" in vain, the Boston passenger went below to a secluded nook, avoiding the eye of man. But when he reached Gloucester he reported all, conscientiously, to the chief of police, who said, "He guessed he'd see 'bout it if it wasn't all right."

The wind rose to a gale that afternoon. Next morning, when my informant returned by the same steamer, the sea was like a mill-pond, except for the porpoises trying to stand on their heads. On Briar Island the tent still stood. My informant was convinced that a murdered body lay within it, and now disclosed himself

to the captain as a stockholder in the line. So a boat was sent ashore with the captain and his passenger.

In the tent they found some cooking utensils, a gun-case lettered "G. B.," a jointed fishing-rod, some tackle, an air mattress, and two blankets soaked with blood.

My informant was beginning to take full notes when the captain insisted on hurrying away. It was none of his business, anyhow, he said. He couldn't lose time to mix himself up with any case in court. So the observant passenger was compelled to hasten aboard, consoling himself that his sagacity had been vindicated.

The adventure gave him a keen, unusual sense of being alive. What he did on reaching Boston need not be recorded, because the meaning of what he had seen may be best learned from the narrative of Skipper Mincheever, of Beverly.

Almost any day in summer you may see the white catboat, "Minnie Mincheever," at anchor before Beverly, unless her skipper, Absalom Mincheever, has gone forth on some cruise. In summer he hires, boat and skipper, to chance comers. During fall and spring he uses the "Minnie"—named for his young sister—as a fishing-boat. The fishing in stormy months keeps Absalom in practice for sudden perils of that terrible coast, and maintains in him that nerve which is as remarkable as his volubility.

Of his adventures he loves to talk, though many are

scarcely important enough to warrant the detail in which he imparts them. But small or great, he tumbles them out almost incessantly, as some landmark brings them to his memory. Thus, on my first trip with him last summer, he poured forth this tale of Norman's Woe :

"Now there's Norman's Woe," he began, waving his free hand toward a brown mound of rock that seemed part of the North Shore near the entrance to Gloucester Bay. "Once I had a tight pinch right there. The wind was a living gale, and——"

"Norman's Woe?" I interrupted.

"Yes, certainly. As I was saying, there was more than half a gale——"

"Do you mean to say there's a real Norman's Woe, the very Norman's Woe where Longfellow's schooner 'Hesperus' was wrecked?"

"Looks real enough, don't it? But none of the Longfellows 'long this coast lost no schooner, so fur's I know. Abe's no sailor, nor yet Hiram, and Pete, him that lives back of Mingo's beach—why, Pete——"

"And that is really Norman's Woe!" I exclaimed. "Well, of the millions who have learned the ballad at school, how few imagine it refers to a real reef! It's peaceful enough to-day. I say, skipper, won't you run in and give me a good look at it?"

"Certainly! Certainly!" said Absalom, and put the "Minnie" about almost as easily as a bird turns.

Close past a buoy bearing a fog-bell we ran in. Now

it was silent. And this was the bell that knelled in the ears of the "Hesperus" skipper as he looked on his little daughter bound to the mast and steered for the open sea !

Absalom's eyes fell on the fog-bell. He shouted, shaking his fist at it, and kept on talking till he had ended his tale :—

How that bell did clank ! You hain't got no idea of what that coast is with a gale from sea. The Woe was all a smother of breakers clear up, for the tide was high. The rollers looked like they'd roar over into the cove behind.

Well, sir, my sister and me—it's her I named this boat for—had been out north yonder fishing, for she was on her holidays, and me engaged with no party for the day, and she'd been teachin' school all spring and winter. As the wind kept rising, we ran for Gloucester Bay. It was in August, just about this time too ; but the blow was fit for October, only warmer. And as we staggered round the point yonder, what should we see but a canoe.

A dory could scarce live in such a sea, but there was that young chap in about here. He was rising free, paddling straight into the face of the waves, flung up till you could see half his keel—then he'd slide out of sight down the trough so you'd think he'd never come up again.

“An open canoe?” says you? Great skeesicks! do you s’pose any open canoe could ’a’ lived there? No; she was divided into bulkheads and decked tight—so I learned after all was done. No sinking her, and he was too smart to let her be rolled over. The danger was that she’d be blown ashore and smashed to kindling, and the life pounded out of him on Norman’s Woe. It turned out he’d come in a rising sea clear away from Briar Island, and now his strength was peterin’ out just in front of the Woe.

All his work was to keep off the rock till he’d get a chance to run for yon gravelly beach, in nearer Gloucester. But ’twas no go; the reef was bound to have him; the gale was more against him every minute, and so the tide was too.

When I caught sight of that canoe I wasn’t noways pleased. There was Round Rock Shoal and Dog Bar for the “Minnie Mincheever” to get past to anchor safely.

I was wet and hungry and mad, and my sister was crosser’n me, for she’d wanted me to start in an hour earlier. Scared? Geewhitaker! No! She can sail a boat with any man on this coast.

What made her ’n me mad was to see the Woe would get that canoe in ten minutes if we didn’t. There wasn’t another rag of sail out but our’n. I couldn’t think what had possessed the man to be canoeing in such weather. He’d ’a’ drifted ashore in two

minutes if he gave the wind his broadside and tried to run past the Woe. All he could do was paddle straight at the wind ; and yet he wasn't half holding his own.

No arms could 'a' made head against that gale and tide and sea together ; he was just working for a few minutes more of life at best.

Well, sir, was I going to risk my boat trying to pick up a crazy young chap ? It would be a desperate risk. There might be room for us where he was, and then there mightn't. I was treble-reefed—not sail enough to get round half-lively. I couldn't seem to feel we'd any clear call in there ; but it hurt my feelings terrible to let him be lost right under my eyes.

I was holding right on for Gloucester when my sister caught sight of the canoe—she'd been watching out the other side. Nothing would do her but we should try the rescue. Her eyes was blazing ; all is, we were about in two shakes, and running about sou'west to get sea room before we'd come about and make straight for that canoe.

Our plan was to run to the stranger, we flying right along the length of Norman's Woe. Before we was too near we'd know if there was a chance of going close enough to take him off and yet saving ourselves. But when we went about out yonder I saw plain that we'd be within a hundred yards of the rock before we could reach him.

If we could snatch him off in passing we might get

clear, but to come into the wind then, or slacken at all, looked like sure death ; we'd be pounding on the Woe before we could get a new move on. And it looked two chances to one we'd be blown on the east end of the reef if we even went near him.

"We can't do it," says I.

"We got to !" says Minnie, stamping her foot ; and was I to be scairt out where a gal didn't blench ?

"Say your prayers, sis," says I ; and in we went, flying half-across the trough.

I could trust the boat agin capsizin', but her bows would fly wide when she rose, if a hand quick as mine wasn't at the wheel. One of us must stand by to throw the man a rope. My sister could steer as well as me ; so I gave her the wheel and got a rope ready. I guess the clank of that bell was soundin' like doom to that young feller, but he kept paddling, steady and cool. His face was set as a stone, and every wave flung crests onto it.

When we were within fifty yards of him I saw there was mighty little use throwing the rope. Most likely he'd miss it. If he dropped his paddle to grab it the wind would throw his bow right round and maybe roll him over. If he did catch on, we'd jerk him overboard and lose time trying to fetch him in, and be poundin' on the reef ourselves.

There was just one chance to get him aboard, but to take it was desperate. It was to go half round on

the wind, run close alongside him, give him a chance to jump for our rail, keep our speed right along, wheel sharp and get back on our course along shore. But there was the Woe so close that I could hear clearly a sort of rumbling like boulders grinding in the waves—and was we to point for that death?

No, sir, I didn't dare ; and my sister flinched too. She kept the course, and we was going to fly past his bow. It was shooting out so



high it looked most as if it would be aboard us if we were in the trough when it next came down. Well, sir, we wasn't three lengths of this boat from that chap when he opened out with a roar like a fog-horn :

“ You—can't—do—it ! Thank—you—for—trying. Tell—a—doctor—to—go—instantly—to — Briar — Island. There's—a—man—there—with—broken—legs. I—was—going—for a doctor.”

Do you see that ? (Here Absalom, swung his free

arm, with a curved elbow, out from his side and around to his front horizontally.) Before the words were out of his lips, that's what this boat did. I thought my sister'd gone clean crazy. She went round on the wind ; it was like making a scoop at the canoe. The "Minnie" jerked straight up on an even keel for two seconds. I thought she was going to jibe ; but in them two seconds our quarter had knocked up against the canoe, and the young chap reached for our rail.

I didn't even look to see what became of him. My eyes were on Norman's Woe. We seemed right on it, sure. Lord ! the trampling of them breakers ! I jumped to my sister's side. We jammed the wheel down together. Thank God it was a cat-boat under us ! Back we were on our course again almost before the young chap could pick himself up from before our feet.

Don't tell me there ain't no miracles these days ! Saving him was one ; getting clear of the Woe ourselves was the other. Some might say the wind slanted a bit favorable just then, being sort of eddied round the Woe. But that's the way with miracles. He works so's you can believe nature did it ; or, if your heart's simpler, you can just believe it's Him.

Anyhow that sudden slant of wind let us bear up as much as four or five points more east, and fetched us barely clear of the Woe before we had to fall off again. But then we had plenty of room to work up into the bay.

The young chap said mighty little but, "Thank you for my life." His name was George Bowles ; a Boston boy. But women is curious creatures. My sister burst out crying and left the wheel to me, and flung herself down into the cabin and lay there sobbing like her heart would break. To think she was so near forsaking him ! says she.

Well, sir, seen enough of Norman's Woe? We'll go about then to clear Eastern Point.

What became of the chap with his legs broken? Why, we ran up with a tug two hours later and fetched him to hospital. Terrible bad break one leg was—bone came through the skin—and the doctor said he'd have bled to death if it wasn't for the way young Bowles had tied up the leg before he left, so's to stop the circulation.

Now you see Dog Bar yonder. Well, once I was ashore there.

Then skipper Mincheever launched into new tales.

IN A CANOE

IN the summer of 1869, I left Thunder Bay with a party of engineers commissioned by the Canadian government to examine a chain of lakes lying between Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg.

Carte blanche as to equipment had been given to our chief engineer, Mr. Lydgely, and perhaps no surveying outfit was ever much more luxurious than ours. Not to mention tents of all sorts and sizes, blankets in great plenty, and the ordinary rations of pork, flour, and tea, we had kegs of syrup, barrels of sugar, firkins of butter, and no less than one hundred and forty-four dozens of canned stuff, mainly salmon, lobsters, and sardines.

"For lunch," explained Lydgely, when old Pell, the weather-beaten second in command, inquired, "What's this here tinware for?"

"Lunch!" roared Pell. "Lunch! Well, I am done!" Then, with a fine affectation of sorrow, he went on, "By gracious, I'm in a fix—didn't bring a dress-suit for dinner! And I've forgot my napkin-ring! Boys," to us chain-bearers, "I hope you've got hair oil and blackin' for three months."

Notwithstanding which sarcasms, I never observed that Pell shrank from the contents of the "tinware" or from the sweets. "It's a man's duty to get such disgraceful stuff out of the way, somehow," he used to say.

I have mentioned the extravagance of our equipment, because it indirectly caused the adventure I am about to relate. The party was an unusually large one, consisting of four engineers, fifteen rod-men and chain-bearers, and about fifty Ojibway Indians, from the Kaministiquia River. Our traveling was done in great "northwest canoes" of bark, each from forty to fifty feet long, which carried our enormous supplies easily in addition to their crews.

Large the supplies needed to be, for the appetite of our Ojibways was almost incredible. Three pounds of pork a day to each man were but as grease for his consumption of flour and hard-tack. They hankered after the special flesh-pots of the whites, also. A favorite amusement of Lydgely's was to bestow a pound or so of butter, a box of sardines, or a pint pannikin of syrup on each of the nearest Indians, when he entered the commissary's tent for "refreshments," as he too often did.

To bolt the butter *au naturel*, to take down the sardines with their oil at a few gulps, to drink off the syrup like water, diverted the Ojibways not less than the performance did Lydgely. Hence a considerable

group usually managed to be near the commissary's tent when the chief engineer thirsted.

One consequence of his habits was that, within a month, the good things provided for the whites had largely gone to comfort the reds, who had engaged to live on pork, flour, tea, and what fish they could catch. At the same time their gorgings had so reduced the staple supplies, that it became necessary to put them on stated rations or send a hundred miles down rushing rivers to Fort William for more food.

Not to delay operations, Lydgely yielded to Pell's advice, and put the Indians on an allowance of two pounds of pork, and as much flour per day to each man. Pampered as they had been this ration seemed to them sadly meagre, and, on the second morning of its issue, there was trouble in camp.

Hamel, our French Canadian commissariat officer, gave out the food at daylight. At half-past six, when Lydgely called "canoës," as was usual at the beginning of the day's work, the Indians did not budge. The chief engineer roared at them again, but still they made no move. Pell went to discover the reason why they were disobedient.

"Nossin for eat," said their spokesman, called by us "Kaministiquia Jim." They had devoured the whole ration for breakfast, and were, therefore, doomed to go without more for twenty-four hours, which were to begin with a hard day's paddling.

“They’ve eaten all their grub,” called Pell.

“The beasts !” roared Lydgely, whose temper was very reprehensible, and strode toward the Ojibways in a rage.

They bunched up together. “Kaministiquia” or “Big Jim” stood out before the others. He was a very bad Indian, “having associated too much with civilized people,” Pell used to say.

“Come along,” yelled Lydgely, and reached out as though to grasp Big Jim. There was the flash of a knife ; Jim drew back his hand with the gleaming weapon as though to plunge it into the chief. We chain-bearers hurried forward. But Lydgely in an instant let out with his left, and sent the noble red man sprawling. That put an end to the discussion.

The fifty Ojibways stalked obediently to the boats, and Big Jim brought up the rear with a cheek that looked distinctly the worse for wear.

I was one of Pell’s assistants. In the canoe which he captained Big Jim always took the bow-steering paddle—these great crafts of bark are always guided by steersmen in both bow and stern. Lydgely went with us that day to explore part of an unknown river which we intended to traverse, and which flows, winding, out of Lake Kaskabeesis, its course broken by great falls. Early in the forenoon we entered the stream, and went hurrying on a brown current occasionally broken by short, chopping rapids.

Our dozen Indians had been sullen all the morning.

"We're going to have trouble with these chaps," said Pell ; "they'll upset us, maybe, or play some confounded trick ; you'll see."

Instead of exchanging short, plaintive-sounding sentences and various grunts, as was their custom, they were absolutely silent. We watched them furtively but closely, fearing that their intentions might be perilous to us. But not an indication of evil intentions did they give.

Big Jim, standing in the bow, piloted to a marvel, distinguishing in time many submerged boulders which we could not see till, flashing past, we made out their dim forms beneath the water that lapped shallow over their dangerous noses. With his frequent motions of head, and interjections of warning for the other steersman, with adroit movements of his paddle forcing the canoe to glance aside from all dangers, Big Jim seemed to be concerned solely with his duty.

Along we flew, the little waves lapping on our sides, the motion inspiringly swift, a sunny blue September sky overhead, the banks, all red with pembina berries, receding like long ribbons. No traveling is so exhilarating as the running down a very swift and somewhat broken current in a light, stanch craft.

"We're not very far from the falls," said Pell, pointing to a white cloud that hung in the blue, spreading from a slowly rising, misty pillar off to the east.

At that moment we were running almost due north, and to suppose that the cloud was from a jump in our river, implied a sharp turn soon.

The canoe had been approaching the shore as though the Indians meant to land not far away, but as Pell uttered the words, Big Jim turned around, threw up his paddle and spoke to the crew. His eye was fairly blazing, and his face, I thought, wore a malign joy as if he had been suddenly inspired with a scheme for revenge. The Indians answered him with a surprised shout, stopped paddling, and looked into each other's faces with some alarm. They were curiously excited, seeming at once elated, defiant, and yet somewhat daunted.

"Wagh!" cried Big Jim, with a commanding gesture, and straightway dug his big paddle in. The next instant all the blades took the water together; the bow turned toward the farther shore; the stroke was now much faster, and the Indians chattered unceasingly. Questioning each other, we three whites could see nothing to fear, nor anticipate any danger for ourselves from which our Ojibways could escape.

Quarter of a mile ahead, our further passage seemed barred, but soon we rounded a turn to the eastward, and there, sheer before us, stretched for half a mile or more an astounding slope of water, smooth mostly as if running over glass. Apparently terminating the slope was that pillar of mist panting from below, then smokily rising and spreading wide on high.

Scarcely had we comprehended the situation when the canoe was fairly on the descent and racing to what seemed inevitable death.

Lydgely sprang to his feet, and made a step toward the stern, intending probably to wrest the steering paddle from the man there. Pell seized him. "No use," he said; "too late! Sit down!"

Lydgely obeyed. We were too far in for retreat. To turn and struggle against the current was clearly impossible. It swept us on with astonishing speed. A large stream at once so swift and so smooth I have never seen before nor since.

Have you ever observed shallow water running down a planed slide some feet wide with quick incline? It seems to shoot along in parallel streaks, it hurries millions of minute bubbles in its volume, its surface is unbroken except above splinters in the boards beneath. Such was the current down which we flew, only this was deep and irresistible.

Little waves no longer lapped against the canoe, it kept an even keel, it was quite untossed, the water was noiseless about us, we might have heard our hearts beating but for the quick stroke of the paddles and the ever-increasing roar from beneath the white cloud toward which we rushed. The Indians had now become as still as death; their bronzed faces had a tinge of pallor, I thought; each man strained forward, peering intently at the mist—features rigid, eyes ablaze.

Big Jim, in the bow, stood motionless, paddle lifted from the water in an attitude of intense attention. We white men looked at each other helplessly—there was nothing to say, nothing to do ; blank with the sense of our utter powerlessness, we could only wait to see what would be the result of a situation so amazing.

Pell spoke but once :

“It ain’t suicide they’re meaning,” said he, “for they ain’t singing their death song.”

We were moving at far greater speed than the river, for the Indians kept up a spurting stroke, giving the canoe steering way, which enabled the man astern to edge her slightly toward the north shore. Yet she left no wake ; five feet from the canoe it was confused with the shooting smoothness of the stream.

I had a faint idea that the Indians meant to land on the shore we were nearing, but this was dispelled with close approach ; the bank was of smooth-faced rock, stratified so evenly that it looked like a board fence level on top, yet rising in height with every moment of our progress. Right to its edge the current ran swift and smooth.

Once more I looked toward the mist in despair. What was beneath it? We had heard that the river’s leap was somewhere very great. That the dreadful jump was close before us seemed certain, from the cloud that overhung, and the roar that swelled upward.

Gazing, I became aware that the smooth slope on

which we slid did not continue to the brink of the fall, but ended in at least one vast roller, as wide as the river itself—a huge bank of water that surged, rounding on high, with appalling massiveness. The top of this huge roller was already near enough to form the down-river horizon. What was beyond?

Short was the doubt. In another instant the great canoe sprang to the curving front of the billow, and went climbing giddily aloft.

Poised on the crest for an instant, I saw nothing but another immense, smooth wave and the pillar of mist still farther beyond. Down we plunged into the vale of waters, and swung on high again as steadily as before, to see in front a short, ragged rapid ending in a few yards of smooth water, close to the most astonishing plunge that mind can conceive.

In that one look from the summit I could see, past both sides of the mist-pillar, how an extending chasm stretched far away beneath the fall, the width of the gorge dwarfed by the height of its perpendicular walls, at the feet of which, on either side, a long ribbon of emerald green sod was laved by the stream until lost in the distance. Such an overpowering impression of being at a dizzy height was gained in the instant's view that I scarcely noticed the strange chant into which the Indians had suddenly broken.

Next moment we thrashed through a curling, breaking wave that drenched us to the skin, and went scurry-

ing into the lapping waves of an ordinary rapid. With the familiar motion I looked ashore. And there, close by us, was a spectacle scarcely less awful than the plunge we were nearing.

The rock wall near us was cleft clean down, and in the wide cleft was a whirlpool that absolutely shrieked as we flew along its extreme edge. Looking across its funnel I could see that from its farther lip the river sent aside to the left a narrow branch that went roaring through a long, deep gorge.

Still we kept straight on. We were now so close to the fall that I could see the long emerald ribbons at the foot of the cliffs almost beneath us. Big Jim, statuesque in the bow, seemed on the very brink of the abyss.

I looked at Pell; he thrust his big left hand into mine and gripped it hard; Lydgely held his right. We looked once more, with never a word, into each other's eyes. Then I closed mine for very horror.

That moment I expected the headlong shoot of the canoe. But there was a strong jerk and swerve instead. I looked again. In that instant, almost on the fall's crown, we had swept into the eddy that ran backward toward the whirlpool with racing speed, and sooner than I can write it we had skimmed along the northern edge of the dreadful funnel, shaken free of its "draw," and were slashing down the easy rapid twelve miles long, by which the narrow north branch makes the same descent as the falls before rejoining the river.

Free of the whirlpool the Indians fairly howled with laughter and pride at the success of their wild exploit.

We learned afterward that the feat had been accomplished but thrice before within the memory of the oldest Indian, on the last of which occasions Big Jim had been in the canoe. He had long been ambitious to repeat the performance and succeeded, to our sorrow, in inducing his companions to make the attempt by way of a practical joke on Lydgely, who thought the Indian sense of humor very peculiar.

MR. HONGOAR'S STRANGE STORY

MY fancy goods store used to be in Pegram's Block, the eleven-story building on the short and busy street called Pegram's Place in this goodly city of Boston. Pegram's Block was formerly but seven stories in height.

The day before they began to tear up the old pitch-and-gravel roof, preparatory to adding four stories more, I went up there to see once more a scene that had become familiar to me. For ten years my habit had been to go out on the roof every fine evening. My sitting room and bedroom were in the fifth story. I am not a married man, but that is not my fault. If I wanted to marry any girl, she could not hear me say so. If any girl were willing to marry me, I could not hear her admitting it. I am a deaf-mute.

Born so? No. Scarlet fever did it when I was eight years old. That wasn't my fault either.

I might have married a deaf-mute, but I do not think two deaf-mutes should marry. Mr. Abdiel K. Jones tells me there is no use giving my reasons for that opinion—another time will do better. What he wants me to do now is to write out the story of my strange adventure on Pegram's Block roof.

When Mr. Jones told me he wished me to write out the story myself, I said I couldn't.

"Why not?" he inquired.

"I can't make it read like a story," said I.

"I don't want you to. I want you to write just the plain truth."

"I'll tell you, and you write it," said I.

"No, I want you to do it."

"Well, I'll try."

"That's right," said Mr. Jones. "You got on by trying things people said you couldn't do. Keep on trying."

Mr. Jones and I talk with our fingers, but he is not deaf nor dumb. He was my teacher from the time I lost my voice and ears. He is my teacher now, though I have a big business to attend to.

I should like to write out how I got along in business. I told Mr. Jones so.

He said, "The right way is to begin at the start. The story of your start is the very thing I want. And it's the story of your start in business too."

Come to think of it, that's true. Here goes, then :

I used to be a roofer. That was just after I left the asylum on Blasette Avenue. Mr. Jones taught me there for seven years. Then he said I ought to be earning my living. I was glad then. He got me the job. I went at it before I was sixteen.

My boss was Mr. Flaherty, the gravel-roofing con-

tractor. All I had to do was keep the caldron of pitch boiling and full. But I helped in other ways all I could. I liked to help, and the men never objected.

That was real kindness to me. As a successful business man, I want to state right here that the man who puts some of his own work off on a boy may be a good friend to the boy, though he's not likely to be much of a man. Many of Flaherty's roofers liked to befriend me in that way.

When I was nearly seventeen my boss got the contract for putting a tar and gravel roof on Pegram's Moral Museum.

Perhaps some people in Boston don't know that Pegram's Block was first a museum. When Pegram failed, Barnum bought his stock of moral curiosities cheap at auction.

"I guess I'll take you with the lot, Pegram," said Barnum, and he hired the old man. So the papers said at the time. I remember it well.

Old Pegram was a smart man. The trouble was he was too smart. He was always going in for big things ahead of the times. Before the roof was half on he had three polar bears and the "only walrus ever on exhibition" in his immense front window.

There they were, cool as you please, on the first of July. Pegram had fixed up a wall of blocks of ice in the back of the window, and overhead. To see that biggest polar bear clawing up fish was a wonder.

If any Boston people remember that as well as I do, they can testify what crowds came the first week or two to see the free moral show in the window, especially at noon. It seemed as if thousands of clerks in stores, working girls, mechanics, ladies, and business men too, used to hurry over at dinner time to look at the free entertainment.

The second of July the roof was going on in a great hurry. There were so many men at work on top that there was no room for heating pitch up there. It was boiled in two big caldrons on the street. Then we hauled it up by rope and pulley in little caldrons.

There were four of these. When full of pitch one of them would weigh three or four hundred pounds, I dare say. It looked like an extra big stovepipe with an extra little stovepipe going up alongside of it.

The little stovepipe connected with a sort of flat stove under the big one. In this we made fire sometimes to keep the pitch hot while it was waiting to be used. The whole thing hung on a handle something like what a wooden pail handle would be if it was fastened on nearly as low as the middle of the pail; only the handle of the caldron was like a V upside down.

At the top of the handle was a rope which passed over a pulley in the arm of a fixed derrick planted on the roof. When two men hoisted up a boiling caldron, it almost touched the sheet-iron rain trough or cornice gutter along the front of Pegram's Block.

Flaherty's men at the street caldrons always warned the people to stand from under when the hot pitch was going up ; but none ever fell. The caldron was kept from possible tipping by a spring on each side that the handle set into. When we wanted to pour hot pitch out of the caldron we had to press in these springs.

At half-past twelve on the second of July I was the only person on the roof. I had eaten my dinner with the other men on the vacant sixth floor, and come up again to put a little fire under a caldron.

This caldron had been hauled up while twelve was striking. There it hung, clear of the cornice, right over the sidewalk. The other end of the rope was passed around a cleat twenty feet back from the front.

I put in some fire, though the pitch was still very hot. Then I sat down in the rain gutter. My feet were dangling more than a hundred feet above the crowd below. If I did that now I should have creepy feelings in the soles of my feet and up my back, I guess ; but in those days I was used to working on high places. The rain trough was a very wide and deep one, for it had to carry off the water from half of Pegram's immense roof. I could sit in it comfortably. My back was against the edge of the roof itself.

When I wished to look very straight down I held on by my two hands to the edge of the rain trough, and bent over till I could see the shine of the plate-glass seven stories below, and right under my backbone.

I was watching the straw hats and parasols of the crowd looking at Pegram's moral walrus and polar bears. Hot and sort of dusty was the glare of sunshine beating down on the pavement. No one was looking up at me.

In the upper windows of the ladies' restaurant across the street I could see women at their dinners. They often leaned out, gazing two stories down on the crowd, while I looked five stories down on them.

Incessantly the people pressed, shifted, and changed around the two street caldrons of boiling pitch, whence pungent smoke, rolling straight up in the windless air, became thin and blue, and waveringly vanished in the sunlit atmosphere before ascending to my elevation.

Sometimes the people crammed closer, leaving the street railway tracks clear for the passage of a car. The solitary policeman then moved along the lane with an air of being indulgent to all his fellow-beings.

It amused me to note how some boys and men rapidly elbowed their way to the front, while more lost ground in cunning attempts to get ahead by pressing to one side or the other, as they fancied they saw an easier passage. Most of the people took position at the rear, and were stolidly pressed up to the front in their turn, as the van constantly melted away and the rear was incessantly renewed.

So goes life. To get to the front speedily one must keep shoving straight ahead, and know how.

I liked to see so much movement. People coming along the two great thoroughfares at the ends of Pegram's Place would see the crowd and hurry to join it. Some hastened away as soon as they found what occasioned the throng.

There was a constant going in and coming out at store doors; people nodding to their acquaintances, a few stopping and shaking hands. To me on high with sealed ears they seemed like so many puppets out of our asylum pantomime, all going around alive.

I wondered what it would be like if my ears were suddenly made good. The sounds of a city I have never heard, for I was a country child before I became a deaf-mute.

One man, threading his way through the throng, caught and held my attention. To and fro, deviously, snakelike he went, often turning his head toward the policeman, sometimes stopping and looking indifferently around. At these times I could not see his hands, but I guessed they were picking pockets.

He excited me. I longed to be able to cry out, "Stop thief!"

In my excitement I leaned over a little too far. Instantly I was dizzy with the fear of falling. After an unbalanced moment, my clutch at the outer rim of the iron gutter saved me, and I sat back, trembling.

Soon the tremor passed. I looked down again. The pickpocket was still busy. It made me angry to

see him robbing the people, all so busy and trustful of one another. I rose to go to the other roofers and point out the thief. As I stood up and stooped for another look, a little pebble rolled off the turned-up edge of my soft felt hat. My eyes followed its fall. It struck a straw hat and bounded to another. Two men looked up. I suppose they said something, as they pointed. All the people suddenly looked up at me. Instantly they began to disperse. I suppose the smoking caldron of pitch just above my shoulder scared them. The pickpocket looked most alarmed, and rapidly made off around the corner.

I was a bashful boy, and the sudden uplooking of so many eyes dazed me a little. Nervously I stepped back, and walked up to the ridge. On my way back I stumbled over the cleat around which the pulley-rope went with two hitches. Without noticing that I had disarranged the tie, I went back down to the edge.

The crowd was smaller than before, but constantly growing. None seemed there who had looked up at me. At least there were now no upturned faces. I looked down again on a street whose pavement was hidden by hats and parasols.

The pitch beside me was boiling with the little fire I had set under it. To stop the ferment, I lifted a block of pitch which weighed about four pounds from the roof, and gently placed it in the caldron. Instantly the smoking vessel began to descend.

The small additional weight had been enough to begin drawing the disturbed rope through the cleat twenty feet behind me.

I grasped at the handle of the caldron. It stopped. My lifting power was more than enough to restore the disturbed equilibrium.

I looked around at the cleat. It was clear that the rope lay so that it might, if further drawn out, give way at any instant and let the boiling caldron fall into the throng.

More than one might be killed by the heavy vessel, and how many hideously wounded by the scalding and sticky mass !

My hands were already deeply burned, for the handle where I had to grasp it, near the edge of the caldron, was hot.

I seized my soft hat with my left hand. At that the caldron began to descend again. With my right hand alone I could not keep it from falling.

I dared not jump back and attempt to get a better hitch on the cleat. The hot pitch might be down among the people before I could seize the rope on the roof.

My hat was now between my two hands and the hot handle. That was a relief. But my burned palms were soon less painful than the strain on my back, neck, arms, and legs.

I know now that I must have lifted with all my

strength, because I was wild with horror at what might happen to the people below in consequence of my carelessness. Out over the edge I had to reach, that my lifting might be straight upward. I could not put a foot forward to get a better balance for my body, without stepping into blank air.

All my force had to be exerted as I stood in the rain trough, my arms held straight before me, my shoulders bent forward toward the vessel. At any instant, if I nervously started, I might pitch over and down into that mass of women, children, and men along with the seething black mass whose acrid smoke drifted into my nostrils.

I thought of swaying the caldron on to the roof as two strong men were accustomed to do before tipping its contents into pails. But that feat was wholly beyond my strength. The two men were always assisted by a third, who held the rope around the cleat so that he might stop it if anything went wrong.

Let any one who wants to get a clear idea of my position hold a heavy weight straight out before him with his two arms extended at the height of his shoulders. In this torturing attitude my strength soon began to fail, and my arms to tremble. Every muscle of my back, neck, and legs was strained in agony.

Yet I could not wholly check the caldron's descent. It slowly went down. The rope slowly paid out. Very slowly, understand. It had gone down six inches when

I knew it was still falling very slowly, but not so slowly as at first.

“God help me ! God help me !” I kept thinking. “God, take my life alone, and help me to save the innocent people away down below.”

Of all the thousand that I could see not one looked up. Some pigeons suddenly flew, and fluttering settled on the roof of the restaurant across the street, four stories lower than I. They preened themselves in the hot sunshine, strutted a little, looked down at the crowd, and flew suddenly away. I turned my head, looking along the roofs for aid. Not a soul was to be seen on any of them. A photographer standing in a skylight across the block three hundred yards away was calmly taking up and examining his row of prints. His side-face was toward me.

Looking far past him I could see the clock face in the white steeple of Park Street Church, by the Common. The time was four minutes to one.

The men must be already coming up to work. But I could not hold on one minute longer. My brain was reeling again with the sensation of height, and my whole body was trembling.

Again I looked down. Such was the anguish of my longing to shout to the people that I know I tried. Now children on their way to school had, in large numbers, joined the throng.

Suddenly the two men employed at the street caldrons

came out from the museum. One looked up. My face and posture must have frightened him. He threw up his hands, and no doubt shouted. The whole crowd looked up at me. I thought how the pitch would fall on the uplifted faces, for now I knew I must drop down in a few seconds.

Next moment the people were flying apart as if an explosion had scattered them. Still I tried to hold up the caldron. The last thing I remember was seeing old Pegram at the back of the crowd that had halted, I could not tell how far away. He shook his fist furiously at me.

All at once I understood that they supposed I had flung down the pitch. For it was gone. I stood on the roof edge, staggered, and fell.

I fell back on the nearly flat roof. When I came to my senses a policeman was waiting to take me to the station on the charge of having attempted wholesale murder. Pegram brought it against me.

Nobody had been hurt. The old man was infuriated by the spattering of pitch over his great show window. For me—I saw clearly that the evidence was nearly all against me. The rope had been left fastened ; it had come undone ; and who but I had been on the roof?

The most sensational paper then in Boston declared, in half a column of delirious headlines, that I hated my fellow-beings because they could hear and talk while I was deaf and mute.

Mr. Abdiel Jones got me out of that trouble by translating my sign language in open court and calling attention to the cracked, bleeding, and swollen fingers, burned nearly to the bone, with which I told my tale.

He and all my friends at the asylum, as well as my boss Flaherty and his foreman, testified to my good character. See the value of a good character. So I was declared not guilty.

Then the sensational paper turned around and advertised me as a hero. The other papers said so too, though I have never been able to see why.

So it came about that I got a big custom from the very next day, when Mr. Pegram set me up with a stock of fruit and knick-knacks in the big museum door. This was his way of showing that he was sorry for charging me falsely. Also it paid—the papers gave his generosity so much free advertising.

From that I got along, adding one thing to another, and at last renting half of Pegram's Block, till now I am greatly blessed with this world's goods, and able to help Mr. Abdiel Jones' plans for educating my fellow-sufferers.

STRAIGHT FOR THE CLIFF

IN Montreal, on fine winter evenings, people passing along the great thoroughfare of St. Catharine's Street were formerly often attracted into the grounds of the Tuque Bleue Toboggan Club, by the confusion of voices and laughter from crowds within. There the people gathered to watch the toboggans rushing around and against a number of long, curving, parallel, and concentric embankments, with which the slides ended. These embankments of snow were thrown up to keep the swift vehicles from crashing into a high board fence that separated the street from the club grounds, which were not of an area to afford a straight run to a finish, from the steep chute whence the toboggans plunged. Down they swooped, four or five almost simultaneously, in flight on five separate grooves of ice. Reaching the level, they shot, with arrowy swiftness, straight for the high fence till, touching an embankment, they half surmounted it, were nearly overturned and then flung off, to sweep slanting around the curve into the polished space of snow, where the run terminated. Because sometimes, a toboggan leapt across an inner embankment to collide with one circling in an outer grove, and

because of occasional upsets, the sport possessed a certain element of danger very evident and therefore exciting to spectators.

One brilliant February evening I stood close to the point where the curves begin, observing the approach of a very swift and heavily-laden toboggan, which had come down the chute alone and now flew straight toward me with such momentum as to give me something of the sensation that comes from watching the approach of an express train. Involuntarily I stepped aside, as though the embankments at my feet were not there to check the toboggan's rush. At that moment I felt my arm clutched and heard a shrill scream at my elbow. There stood a lady with whom I had a very slight acquaintance. She seemed quite unconscious of having seized my arm. I was aware that all eyes were fixed on her, and that a perfect lull of voices and laughter had occurred. While every one gazed at her, she alone watched the approaching toboggan. Her eyes were wide with fear; her face showed pale beneath the electric light; she did not so much as breathe, but stood there rigid, grasping my arm, so that I could feel each finger tip. It was for little more than an instant; then the toboggan load was flung up the embankment at our feet, its ladies screaming with fearful joy as it sheered madly off, and swept away safely on its course. I did not watch it further, for the lady at my side had fainted. Not until a day went by did I understand the cause.

"What a trouble I must have been to you," said she, next evening, in her own drawing room. "To think of my fainting—before all those people! I'm ashamed of myself! It was so fortunate that you knew me. What possessed me—to go into the grounds, I mean—I can't think, for I might have known I couldn't bear the sight—indeed, I did know that. I have refused for years to slide or look at a slide. It was impulse. I was passing, and suddenly I thought I would dare to look on. How foolish! Had I an accident? Oh, yes, indeed! A fearful thing—not here, you know; not in Montreal. But we had a dreadful accident once." And she shuddered at the recollection. "Shall I tell you about it?"

"You had better let me tell it," said her husband; "it is sure to make you nervous."

She acquiesced, and he sat beside her and held her hand while he spoke.

"You know the gorge of the Niagara, below the falls, don't you?" asked he. "No? Well, you know there is a gorge. The river jumps down its hundred and sixty feet, and then crowds along in a dark chasm between almost precipitous walls. To stand anywhere near the edge and look down is to feel as if impelled forward to go over—a horrible sensation. Well, a road on the Canadian side used to run nearly parallel with and close to the cliff's edge—perhaps the road is there yet. Driving along it at night one often

shrank back, and clutched the reins tighter, at thought of the sheer drop so close by; and how his horses might shy and dash over and down—down, turning, struggling, confused in the air—down into the black gulf!”

“It is a fearful drive at night,” said the lady shivering.

“It was especially dangerous in the winter, when the mist from the falls had been drifting down river, freezing and making the road slippery as glare ice. Then a sleigh slashed and slipped from side to side, sometimes tipping a little, and one felt that a quick overturn might fling him over the glassy surface, which inclined slightly to the cliff, vainly grasping for a hold, till at last—over. In one way or another, the imminence of the precipice is often forced on the attention of residents near by. One is always conscious of living near the jumping-off place, and when one gets back into the country, which in places rises quickly, a little from the cliff, one has a glad sensation of being out of danger.”

“Yes, I’ve felt that,” said the lady. “I was always nervous there.”

“Yet she went tobogganing on a slide that ran straight toward the chasm,” explained her husband in a half-amused, half-chiding tone. And again his wife shuddered.

“It was in this way,” he went on. “The ground, as I said, slopes quickly upward at a little distance away from the sheer bank. Now, my wife used to be wildly

fond of tobogganing—a regular Montreal girl, you know. Her nerves were never weak enough to restrain her from sliding. So, eight years ago, when we were living up there, I got leave from a farmer to make a toboggan slide on a natural slope in his field. It ran straight toward the precipice, just as the Tuque Bleue does toward St. Catharine Street ; and I cut off danger by a high, curving snow-embankment, exactly in the Tuque Bleue way. The only effect of the precipice on our operations was, that I had the embankment made very high at the point where we ran into it first. There I had a sort of plank roof built for the foundation and carried the bank up fully twenty feet. It was quite satisfactory. We dashed into it at an immense speed when the slide was in good order ; sometimes the toboggan climbed half-way up or more——”

“Often, at first, I thought we must go over,” interrupted his wife.

“In that case we must have been across the road and over the cliff in an instant,” he resumed. “But that fear soon passed away. We had a jolly winter, the snow being unusually deep in that district that season. How we used to shoot down, then go skimming over the level, then hurl against the embankment like mad, and go tearing around the curve to a long, slight slope down river, close to and parallel with the road ! The only trouble was that many people complained that we frightened their horses, which in that country seldom

see tobogganing. At last they threatened legal interference ; and, no doubt it was too bad of us, considering the danger from the shying of skittish teams along that dreadful bank."

"I've often thought since that we almost deserved to be punished for our selfishness," said the lady.

"Well, by March the complaints had become very many, and we made up our minds to discontinue the sport. The mist had been sweeping down river for some days ; it was a cold snap. The road and narrow bank beyond were fearfully slippery with ice, made by the freezing mist ; the teamsters were angrier than ever at our sliding, and reports reached us that some of them talked of forcibly hindering us. I determined to save them the trouble, so on the seventh of the month I engaged laborers to come next day to remove the snow and planking, that everybody might know we had yielded to public opinion.

"About nine o'clock on the evening of the seventh, my wife went to look out of the dining-room window, which faced toward the hill where the chute was. It was a lovely, clear, moonlight night, with a spectral, thin mist drifting over the landscape, sometimes shifting to let us see the sky and stars. I came and stood by my wife's side.

"What a night for tobogganing !" said she suddenly. 'Do let us go out and have a few more runs ; it's our last chance this winter.'

“ Her sister was visiting us—also an enthusiast for the sport. ‘Do,’ said she too. Now I had made up my mind—or thought I had—not to give teams on the road any more frights. But the ladies were in a majority and of course they had their way. In a few minutes we stood at the head of the slide. I shall never forget the scene !

“ Across the river, down whose chasm the mist drifted slowly, we could see the moon, high above the volumes of vapor, in a clear and starry sky. Of the embankment and the road nothing could be seen, because of mist clinging to the low ground before us. The hillside, and part of the level near its foot, showed one glistening icy groove. Through the dull roar of the not distant falls we could hear sleigh-bells, and a few shouts came from the road, toward which we soon swooped down. The chute was in splendid order—we had used it till late that afternoon. I think we never flew so fast ; our speed was frightful ; yet I never imagined we could leap the embankment.

“ We felt in no danger except that on rushing against the snow wall we might be rudely upset. The thought of that horrible chasm yawning not more than seventy or eighty feet beyond the embankment had lost its terrors through custom. Down we rushed, our shrill bells fairly shrieking. I can hear now the gleeful ring of my wife’s laugh, as we reached the level and skimmed on, with that peculiar sensation of being lifted up and

forward with increasing speed, which comes to tobogganers running very swiftly on a smooth plain.

As my wife laughed, a chorus of shouts—alarmed screams, rather—came from the road. ‘Back! Hold on! Oh, for God’s sake, don’t come! Hold on!’

“Peering ahead, I could for the instant see nothing except mist. But perhaps barely a second had gone when I dimly saw forms ahead, and then made out a large group of men, some waving caps, all wildly gesticulating, some standing right in our way, some on the top of the embankment. They perceived us clearly then. ‘Oh, merciful God,’ cried one aloud; ‘he’s got the ladies with him!’

“Then came a confused, wilder cry, and some of the men ran away, while others bunched up as if to oppose our passage. My feeling at that moment was of anger only. I thought they were there to interfere with us. I had—God forgive me—an instant of savage joy to think how they would scatter before our desperate rush, or be hurled down; for it was not possible to conceive of human beings stopping our fierce flight.

“‘Out of the road,’ I cried, ‘or we’ll be into you! Out of the way!’

At that instant—if any division of instant can be imagined when all was occurring as in a flash—the ladies shrieked their alarm. And before us a great cry arose again, and a tremendous voice shouted: ‘Hold—Hold back!—Turn out!—Stop!—FOR GOD’S SAKE STOP!—

YOU'LL BE OVER THE CLIFF!—THE EMBANKMENT'S TORN AWAY!

“The men opened their ranks instinctively—we were within thirty yards of them—and I saw, through a wide gap, the massed mist of the gorge, at which we were hurling!

“All was plain. The threats against us had been fulfilled without warning—of course they had not supposed we would be out that night. There was the gap exactly where the wall should have flung us on the curve, and I understood that in a few seconds more we three would fly into the air off that hideous precipice, to tumble over and over, and fall, mangled, upon the black flood of the then open river.”

“Why did you not throw yourselves off?” I asked.

“I was paralyzed with fear,” said the lady, in a shuddering whisper; “and my sister had already fainted dead away.”

“I saw or knew that,” went on her husband. “I felt that both were immovable and lost. Could I slip off and let them go? The man had cried, ‘Turn out!’ But that was impossible. The grooves from the chute lasted clear to and around the curve, therefore held the toboggan straight toward death. There was but one thing to try, and that I knew was hopeless. Seizing the siderods I slid off and dragged behind, though well aware that over that smooth ice I must be pulled with scarcely any resistance by the astonishing momentum

the vehicle had attained. One glance I gave—the gap was very wide—then I held on and dragged, and then in an instant I knew nothing.”

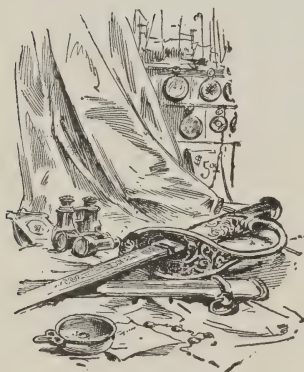
“But you escaped, you escaped—you did not go over!” I exclaimed.

“I will tell the rest,” said the quivering voice of the lady. “My sister had fallen back upon me. I felt that George was no longer touching me. Oh, what a cruel wrong I did him in that flash of thought—I believed he had abandoned us! I shrieked, more, I think, with the horror of his leaving us than anything else; that had in some way crowded out my fear of the flight into the void before. As I shrieked, I saw the men huddle together right in our path; two knelt, with their shoulders forward, bracing themselves for the shock. Then there was a horrible crash—we seemed hurled up—and then I fainted. When I recovered I was at home, my sister beside my bed. She had escaped with bruises; but I was very badly hurt, and George had his shoulder broken.”

“But how did you escape?” I asked.

“The two men—brave fellows they were,” answered her husband; “the two who knelt were both very badly hurt; for the toboggan flung both down, and rising flew right into the solid mass of men behind, there stopping. Half a dozen were more or less injured. I don’t know but it was as terrible an adventure for the teamsters as for ourselves.”

THE SWORD OF HONOR



NOT long ago Mr. Adam Baines, a gray-haired survivor of the Pennsylvania Cavalry Service, told this curious story to his friends :

It was the middle of May and my mind was running on Memorial Day, old comrades, and a sword, which had often caught my eye as I walked past the pawnshop window. Though it could not dignify the dingy place, it gained, I thought, additional severity from the assorted squalor. Back of it, concealing the interior of Amminadab's store, hung two frowzy gowns of yellow silk, suggestive of bedizened negresses. Beside it lay the scabbard, flexible, white, and gold-mounted. An open case of tarnished fruit-knives, some flashy opera glasses, cheap rings, brooches, and sleeve-links lay strewn about. Rows of questionable watches hung on hooks close to the window ; I had to

stoop below them to see the bleak blade of the sword. It was plainly a costly thing, not made so much for service as for distinction to the wearer ; a straight, narrow, double-edged, rapier-like weapon, which might thrust well, though its ivory hilt and carven guard could not endure the clash of heavy combat. I took it for a sword of honor at first glance, and fancied many explanations of its presence in a pawnbroker's window—one of the most pathetic features of a great city—the showplace of so many mementos of despair !

Why was the sword there ? Honor impawned, and unredeemed ! The temptation to buy it was on me, who had no need for a sword nor even a thought of using it for decoration ; for how shall a man joy in a sword not his own nor inherited from some sword-bearing ancestor ?

I had no money to spare for the luxury of giving decent privacy to the old sword, yet curiosity concerning it so grew in me that I started from suburban Newton to Boston one morning ten minutes earlier than usual, solely that I might have time to look more particularly at the weapon. I had as yet seen no more of it than I could see in passing rapidly to business or my train, for a man of many jocular acquaintances is not apt to linger before a pawnbroker's window on Kneeland Street at the risk of incurring elaborate imputations that he had been seen weeping before a family treasure that he has put "up the spout."

When now I stopped, I saw that the blade bore an inscription too faint for my naked eyes to read ; so I put on my spectacles. It was then clear that the letters, which occupied a space between the hilt and the beginning of the edge-trenches, were turned with their backs to me. The inscription must be interesting ; my curiosity became imperative ; I opened the pawn-shop door and confronted Amminadab, the owner of the sword.

Amminadab did not move from his high chair behind the broad counter, which was partly enclosed by wire lattice-work, but merely raised his eyes from a tray of rings at which he had been peering, looked expectant, and remarked, "Vell?"

"You have a sword in your window," said I ; "I should like to look at it."

"You wandt to buy dot sword?"

"Possibly. What's the price?"

"Brice? Vell, I don't make no brice for dot sword yet." He spoke English as fluently as I, but always as if with a bad cold in the head, which affected his pronunciation in a much greater degree than I shall try to imitate. "Maybe I don't sell dot sword. Vat you give for him, hey?"

"How can I tell without seeing the sword?" His reluctant manner surprised and annoyed me.

"I don't care about sell dot sword."

"Hang it, man," I said, "what's the use of hag-

gling in that way? If you think I'm going to bid for it without handling it, you're mistaken. Let me see the sword if you want to sell it."

"But I don't want to sell it."

"What do you show it for, then? Queer business! Suppose I offered you fifty dollars for it?"

His eyes twinkled. "I got plenty more swords—not here. I can let you have a first-class sword for fifty dollars. You want a first-class sword, hey?"

"Bosh! that's the sword in the window I want, if any. Fifty dollars is a good deal of money for you to turn your nose up at!"

"I don't turn my nose up at fifty dollars, nor fifty cents, no, nor one cent!" he said, as if he felt himself accused of flagrant sin. "But—vell now, s'elp me, I don't like to show dot sword close up. It's the inscription; dot's what you want to read, and dot's just what I don't like to show."

"Huh! you ought to keep the sword out of your window, then."

"I keep dot sword in the window because——" he stopped and pondered. "Vell, it's none your pizness, anyways—unless——" he peered at me with sudden surmise. "You know something about dot sword?"

"How can I tell without examining it?"

"You suppose maybe you know de cabtain?" He spoke with great interest.

"Let me see the sword and I'll tell you."

"You was in the big war?"

"I was."

"Vell, dot's good ; maybe you know de cabtain in the army?"

"Maybe—or in this army," and I displayed the badge of my Post of the Grand Army of the Republic.

"Vell, dot's so ; but maybe you always live in Boston?"

"No ; I've lived in Philadelphia, New York, Toronto, Montreal, St. Paul."

"Huh ! Vell, I don't suppose you get agvainted vid de cabtain in any of dose places. Too bad, too bad ! I tell you, I give fifty dollars myself if somebody dot used to know de cabtain vas here. Yes, s'elp me, I give big money—five dollars, anyvays."

"Where did he live?"

"In California, after the war."

"Whereabouts?"

"Blagg City."

"I never heard of Blagg City."

"No ; dot's just it ! If there was any Blagg City now I could find somebody dot used to know de cabtain. But it's gone up years ago, all off the face of the earth. It vas vun of dose gold mine places."

"Where did he live after that?"

"Vell, plenty places, I guess ; but I don't know none except Boston, and I can't find anybody in Boston dot knowed him before."

“That’s queer. Why do you want to find some one that knew him before?”

“Vell, s’elp me Moses, if you could see the cabtain’s daughter you’d want to find somebody to help her yourself!” Amminadab spoke with such emotion that I felt myself quite drawn to him.

“Does she live here?”

“Live! Vell, you might call it living. She sews, poor child—ach, it’s the pity of the world!—she vorks in a sveatshop. It’s Jacob Lowenthal she vorks for. Come—you vas a soldier in dot big war; de cabtain vas a soldier; I’ll show you dot sword, and I’ll tell you all I knows about it. Who can tell? maybe you’ll help her out of dot sveatshop. I done all I can—maybe you think the profit is big in my pizness? Vell, there’s no profit, not to speak of—anyvays she von’t be helped by me. Here, read what dot sword says.”

He had stooped through the yellow silks that hid the window, and now held the blade cautiously in his two hands.

I took the beautiful sword, in which the inscription lay almost as indistinctly as a watermark lies in writing-paper.

*Independence Day, 1867.
This sword of honor is presented to
Captain Horatio Polk Blagg
by the inhabitants of Blagg City, California,
to replace his veteran sword destroyed by the
recent fire,*

*and in token of their admiration for his glorious
record of valor in
The Army of Virginia,
as well as their profound esteem for his character
as a Gentleman and his services on the late
Vigilance Committee.*

“The Army of Virginia !” said I. “Why, he was a Confederate.”

“Confederate,” said Amminadab, an immigrant since the war ; “what’s Confederate ?”

“A rebel ; a Southern captain.”

“The cabtain was on the rebel side ?”

“Yes, certainly. General Lee’s army was called the Army of Virginia ; our army against him was called the Army of the Potomac.”

“Vell, s’elp me ! and I spend more as fifty cents in postage and paper to the war department and the pension agents, trying to get a pension for dot child ! The government don’t give pensions to the children of rebel soldiers, hey ?”

“No. But tell me about the captain. We may be able to find some relatives of his in the South, yet.”

“Rachel !” he called loudly ; and in came a handsome, fat, untidy young woman through the door from the back shop. “Rachel, you vait here, if you please. I vant to tell this gentleman about the cabtain. Maybe he can find out how to help dot child ; he vas a soldier himself. But hold on—you vas on the other side.”

"That's all right," I said. "North and South are all one now. I shall be glad to do anything I can to help the captain or his daughter."

"Ach, but that's the sad story," said Rachel. "It was one day I was waiting in the shop for Amminadab ; he'd——"

"I'll tell dot story myself, if you please," said Amminadab sharply, and drew me hastily into the back shop, a storeroom for dingy pledges and a place to which customers were brought for private bargaining.

Amminadab gave me a chair, took another himself, and as if compelled by the genius of that room to whisper hoarsely as in bargaining, thrust his face near mine, and began :

"It vas so, just as Rachel vas telling. Von day I vas looking at some chewels in here, and Rachel opened dot door and said, 'Pizness, Amminadab' ; so I come out into the shop. There stood an old, tall man. His hair vas very white and long, and he carried something under the long cloak dot covered his arms. So I just said, 'Vell?' At dot he kind of flushed and caught at vat he had under his cloak, and he looked so grand and so kind of sorry too, dot I vas kind of ashamed I hadn't spoke kinder ; so I said, 'Maybe you vas vanting to buy something you saw in dot vindow, sir?'

"'No—no—not that,' he said, very nervous. 'I

came in because——' and he stopped, as if he was too sorry or ashamed.

"Then Rachel said, 'Any gentleman may be stuck for money now and then these hard times.' Dot woman of mine has got the kindest heart; she'd broke down my pizness in two weeks if I don't mind out! 'You go away, Rachel,' I said; 'I'm doing pizness here.' And so she come in back here, and some ways the old gentleman don't seem he was feel so ashamed ven there was no woman to be pitying him.

" 'I do want to raise some money,' he said. 'Not for long—it can't be for long. I will pay you soon.'

" 'Dot's all right, sir,' I told him. 'I don't lend money except on goods, and so I keep my security all right.'

"He flushed up again. 'I give you my word,' he said.

" 'All right, sir; all right. I prefer to deal with a gentleman of his word; but it's pizness to look at the goods. You got something there, sir?'

"He fumbled at his cloak, and drew out something narrow in a long, black oilcloth bag. 'It's my sword,' he said; and he looked hard at the street door, and said, 'I suppose some one may come in at any moment. Have you no private place?' So I said, 'Please come in here, sir.' And Rachel went back to mind the shop.

"I offered him a chair, but he wouldn't sit down. He stood right there and pulled the string at the end of

the bag, and drew out dot sword so careful as it vas a baby. Then some ways, with a quick motion, he wrapped the bag around his wrist, and his left hand vas on the scabbard and his right vas on the hilt, and he stood up very straight, and out flashed dot sword so quick I jumped up with my two hands out before me like dot. I don't like the vay dot sword flash, anyhow. But I know swords like I know everything, and it vas easy to see dot sword cost a big lot more money than anybody would ever give for it again.

"He handed me the scabbard, and I looked at it ; he don't seem like he want me to handle the sword ; and fact is, I don't care about handling sharp swords, anyvays. So he laid it down on dot table and I looked at it and turned it over, and put down my head and read dot inscribition. His face vas vorking very miserable as I read it, and he gave two or three little coughs.

" 'It's the last thing in the world I would borrow on,' he said ; 'and indeed it's the last thing I've got left of any value. But I must have money to-day.'

" 'Vas you expecting to borrow on dot sword, sir?'

" 'Why, of course.' And I heard him visper to himself, 'My God, my God, that I should be brought to this !'

" 'Vell, sir, dot sword is a good sword ; but there's no kind of security in a sword.'

" 'What, you can't lend on it? It's a valuable sword ; it cost——' and he stopped, as if ashamed.

“ ‘How much was you wanting?’ I asked.

“ ‘As much as possible. I will certainly pay it back. I couldn’t lose my sword. Ah, it can’t be but I shall get some better employment,’ to himself, you understand.

“ ‘I might advance five dollars on it,’ I said.

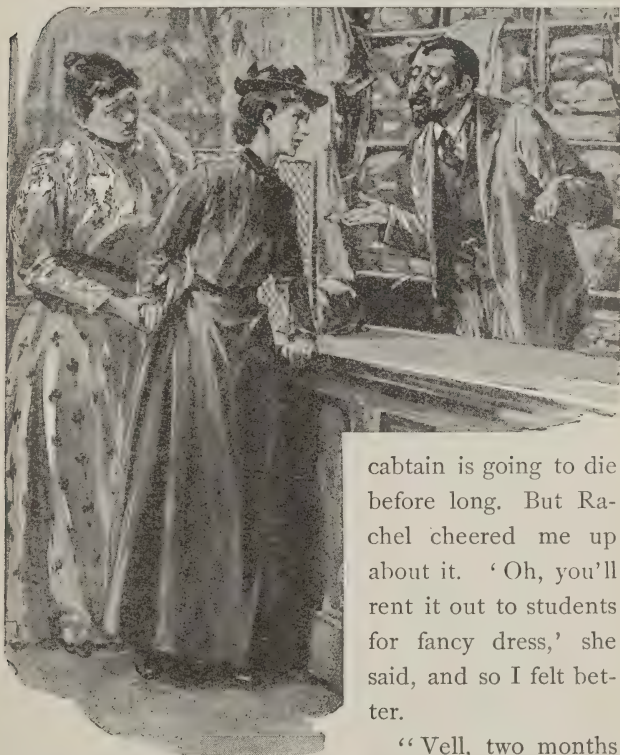
“ ‘Five dollars ! Five dollars ! Oh, dear heaven ! Why, the sword is worth——’ and he stopped again.

“ ‘Dot sword don’t cost no less than one hundred dollars,’ I said. ‘Dot ivory is carved very fine, and dot blade is Toledo inlaid with gold. But s’elp me, sir, it ain’t salable one bit, and I can’t make use of it in my family. Five dollars ; s’elp me, I can’t do better.’

“ ‘Vell, he gave a cry out, and stared at me so hard I vas scared. Then he kind of vispered to himself, ‘It may save her life. Five dollars—it will buy the medicine and wine. I’ll have to take your offer. Of course you’ll not put my sword in your window?’

“ ‘No, sir ; not as long as the ticket runs,’ I said. And I made him out the ticket and gave him the money, and he turned away as if he vas in a dream of sorrow. Just outside the street door he stopped, and he clutched at the left side of his cloak as if he had lost something ; and I guess it vas that he missed the sword, and at that he looked just dreadful, and he went tottering away, bowed down, amongst the stream of peoples. And dot’s the first and last time I ever see the cabtain.

“Vell, sir, I put away the sword in its bag, and I told Rachel, ‘My five dollars is gone. I’m a fool for pizness. I vas crazy to lend five dollars on dot sword. Dot old



cabtain is going to die before long. But Rachel cheered me up about it. ‘Oh, you’ll rent it out to students for fancy dress,’ she said, and so I felt better.

“Vell, two months went by—the ticket had three months to run—and two weeks more went by, and I made up my mind my five dollars vas gone, when in came a small, little, fair-

haired girl and laid dot ticket on the counter. She was maybe about seventeen, but little and in shabby black, and lean and pale as starvation ; and ach ! but her blue eyes vas sorry ! It's too much misery I see in the faces that come here for me to notice misery much ; but dot young girl's face vas like a seraph what's got it's heart broke somevays. And she looks at me so sad, and she says, 'You've got my father's sword,' and sure enough, it vas the ticket I gave the cabtain.

"Was your father wishing to get out his sword?" I asked.

"My father is dead,' she said, just like a marble angel might visper. 'Father died three weeks ago, and I found that ticket in his pocketbook. I want to know if I can get more time to pay back the money. I can only pay two dollars now.'

"I'm afraid you need the money more as dot sword,' I said.

"Oh, no, no ! I couldn't bear to live and think my father's sword of honor was sold away so I could never get it,' and her lip began to tremble and she looked at me, trying so hard to keep her face brave dot Rachel—Rachel vas standing beside me all de time—Rachel slipped around the counter and stood beside her, and began to pat her hand—she was such a young girl to be so sad ! And with that the old cabtain's daughter broke right down and began to cry

and cry, and Rachel just picked her up in her arms like she was a baby, and carried her in here. Vell, dot's all right for Rachel; but pizness is pizness, and I vas afraid I'd be foolish about money if I come in and see dot young girl cry some more. I could hear through the open door, and Rachel was saying, 'You'll take the sword with you. I've got my own money—I'll settle with Amminadab myself. He's just got to do his business on business principles.'

“‘Oh, but you're good and kind,’ I could hear the girl visper; ‘but I couldn't take it back in that way, there would seem to be a stain on the sword.’

“‘Ach, now, now!’ says Rachel. ‘What for?’

“‘My father engaged to pay back the money, and—and I couldn't take charity; you mustn't be vexed—you're so kind to me. But if you'd ask him to give me more time. I've worked hard and I've saved these two dollars since poor father was taken away. I could save three more, I'm sure, if Mr. Solomons would give me three months more.’

“‘You've been starving yourself, my child,’ Rachel said. ‘You're all gone away to a shadow. Have you no one to help you?’

“‘No one in all the world. My father was a gentleman, and when we got so poor he got out of the way of having friends—poor father! And so there seemed to be no place for him anywhere, and at last he came to Boston, and now it's all at an end.’

“ ‘It was such hard times in Boston last year,’ said my Rachel.

“ ‘Yes. Oh, so bitter hard ! Father was ready to do anything—he was peddling books at last—and I got a little sewing ; but then I took sick and all the burden was on poor old father. It was when I was sick that he brought his sword here, and that was the last thing he would have parted with, except me. He bought things for me with it, and I know now he just starved himself.’ She stopped, and I could hear her sobs. ‘So I had scarcely got well again before he was down sick—and—oh, it’s all, all ended now—poor father ! He never told what he had done with his sword, and I was afraid to distress him if I asked him. But he valued it more than his life ; and indeed I couldn’t live and not get it ! And, oh, if your husband will give me three months longer !’

“ ‘So I opened dot door, and I said, ‘I will keep it three months or three years, if you like,’ and the end of that talk vas that I made her out a new ticket for the three dollars. Dot vas all right, hey?’”

“ ‘Why, yes,’ said I. “ ‘I don’t see what more you could do, as she wouldn’t take help. And has she never been able to pay the money?’”

“ ‘Not von cent ! At last she come and told my wife, ‘I try, oh, Mrs. Solomons, I try so hard—but I can’t save one quarter-dollar in all this time !’ And it vas then I found out she vas vorking in Lowenthal’s

sweatshop. And there she is vorking now ; and every day I'm afraid she'll come and find dot sword in my window. I've been showing it in hopes somebody will see it that knew the cabtain."

"Can't you get her to tell you the names of some friends or relations?"

"No—not one word. I guess there's some secrets. But I was trying to find out myself, and like von big fool I never even found out that the cabtain was a Southerner."

"We must see if anything can be done to help her," I said. "At least she ought to have her father's sword. Here's three dollars ; you take the sword to her and tell her that an old soldier who respects her father's memory sends it to her."

"Vell, yes, I might try that. But if she would take it from somebody dot respects the cabtain's memory, she'd take it from Rachel or me."

"Try it, anyway," and I pressed the money on him.

"Vell," he said, looking over the money, "pizness is pizness, and if I'm going to call myself paid, I've got a right to the interest."

"Certainly, certainly," I said, amazed ; for I did not doubt and don't doubt now that he was ready to give up his entire claim as a matter of kindness. But if he was to call himself paid off, why—"pizness !" and I paid him the interest.

That was on Saturday. On Monday I went into the pawnshop again.

“Vell, vat you think?” ejaculated Amminadab, spreading both hands, palms up, when he saw me. “She took dot sword all right! And she said, ‘God bless you!’ Now how vas dot? She took it from you, and she wouldn’t take it from me!”

“Partly because you told her I was an old soldier, and partly because you and your wife have been so good to her that she didn’t wish to cost you money besides,” I suggested.

“Ach, no. She don’t like to take nodings from a Jew—dot’s it. Vell, no matter, I bury dot poor, good young girl at my own exbense some of these days. She is working her life out just to live!”

“Sad she can’t get better employment?”

“Embloyment!—a total stranger in Boston!—and she that would be just rags if she vasn’t so neat! Don’t I tell you before that she sold every bit of her clo’es, except what she stood in, to bury the old cab-tain? Her clo’es is so shabby she can’t get good vork—and besides, ain’t Boston got plenty of girls looking for good vork, and ain’t plenty of ’em starving? No, she can’t get better employment unless somebody gets it for her. For me, all I can do is get her vork in some sveatshop maybe no better than Lowenthal’s.”

Well, last week a pale young girl, starting from

Boston on a train bound for Gloucester, said, as a Newton lady kissed her good-bye: "Oh, you've all been so kind to me! May God bless you all, and bless the Grand Army forever."

I had done no more than to introduce the case to my post of the Grand Army. They put their hands in their pockets, and left the diplomacy to the Newton lady. She called on Miss Blagg at the sweatshop, and the outcome was that the young lady was provided with a good situation not far from Gloucester, as governess to young children in an excellent family. The outfit for our Post's adopted daughter would have been unreasonably sumptuous, had she not vetoed our designs in large part. Of Miss Blagg's family and personal history we were fully informed; but it would be improper to tell you the reasons she and her father had against seeking aid from his relatives in the South.

When she had left us I went in to tell Amminadab, but he smiled immensely at my assumption that he needed any information in the case.

"Vell, you don't imagine that the cabtain's daughter don't say good-bye to us! Boh! she come in here yesterday on purpose. And she cried ven she vas telling about how good the Grand Army was to a Southern soldier's daughter; and she said it was such a noble-hearted kindness that she couldn't have any right to refuse. And she said about you, 'God Bless you and God bless the Grand Army.'"

“That’s not all,” said Rachel; “the captain’s daughter *kissed me!* And she said, ‘God bless Aminadab; and she said she’d never forget how kind we were to her, and——’”

“Oh, don’t, now, Rachel—dot’s enough. The young lady *vas* egcited, and she said too much about us. But I *vas* glad she said, ‘God bless Mr. Solomons.’ Dot’s all clear profit—she never cost me von cent!”

AN ADVENTURE ON THE ST. LAWRENCE

LAST summer, in the clubhouse of the Kenoutche-
wan Bait-fishers, a well-known Canadian lawyer
told the following story :

Some years ago, while out for an afternoon's fishing with my son Harry, who was then ten years old, I anchored our skiff off the northeast or lower end of Gomeguk Island, where one division of the St. Lawrence runs in a deep groove, much frequented by channel catfish.

Steamers seldom passed through the channel where we floated, though the wash of upward bound boats disturbs the surface slightly as they swing half-around, about three hundred yards down river, to enter the southern and straighter, though shallower, channel, which most pilots prefer.

Harry found the occasional rocking by steamboat waves a pleasant variation from the scarcely perceptible motion with which we drifted—only one of our fifty-six pound weights being out as a bow anchor—against the gentle current, under the pressure of a breeze up

stream. The sharp stern of the skiff floated free and riding with forty feet of line out she swayed from side to side of the deep water, which never furnished me with better sport than on that day.

The big, dun-backed, yellow-bellied, strong, clean, tentacled fish took my minnows eagerly, and fought in a highly satisfactory manner for their own lives. So it went on, till Harry, who had come out with emphatic asseverations that he would gladly fish till midnight, disclosed a keener enthusiasm for something to eat about tea time than he did about the fish I was catching, and often inquired anxiously when I intended going home.

I lingered, however, for "just one more bite,"—taking four fish by the delay,—till the sun sank slowly behind the island. Then glancing under my eyebrows at Harry while stooping to impale a new minnow, his woe-begone little face gave me a distinct thrill of compunction and flinging away the bait I said: Well, small boys mustn't be made too hungry, I suppose. We will go home now, Harry."

I was rather astonished that his face, which had brightened with my words, suddenly clouded, as he looked keenly down river. Then the explanation came.

"Oh, there's another steamboat coming up, father!" he exclaimed. "Do stay a little longer! I wish you would stay till we get her swell,"

It was to me a striking illustration of how curiously and wonderfully boys are made. Here was a lad too hungry to enjoy the deep and philosophic pleasure of fishing, but not hungry enough to forego an absurd delight in being rocked by half a dozen steamboat rollers. However, his request coincided with my inclination, and putting on a new bait I engaged again in the most fascinating of pastimes.

I sat in the bow, with my face up stream, Harry watching, with big eyes, the oncoming steamer, the intermittent rumble of whose paddle-wheel became momentarily more distinct, till the slap and thrust of each float could be heard close behind. Suddenly my little boy jumped up and exclaimed, in a tone of much surprise :

“Why, father, look at the steamboat !”

I turned to see in the twilight the big, white “Theban,” not three hundred yards distant, not swinging into the south channel, but coming, at about half speed, straight at where we lay !

Dazed, I sat silent a moment, then roared at her, “Ahoy, ‘Theban,’ ahoy !” with all my power of lung, searching my pockets at the same time for my clasp-knife to cut the anchor rope. There was no time to haul in the weight ; to cut away was the only chance of escape.

The channel of the river, as I knew well, was too narrow for the big boat to give us more than the

narrowest berth, and there was no sign that her pilot intended to yield us any. I could see him dimly in the wheel-house, and, apparently, not another soul was on board.

She did not slow down in the least, though I continued to yell madly. The roar of her paddle-wheels was terribly loud.

Harry's childish treble shrieked through my hoarse shouts, but there was no sign that we were seen or heard. Yet it was impossible to believe the pilot to be unaware of the boat in his course, lead-colored though it was, and deep as were the shadows of the island.

On she came, during the few seconds while these observations went through my mind, straight at us. The swamping of our skiff in the steamer's roll was certain now, even should she sheer off as much as possible in passing—certain, even if we had been suddenly freed from the anchor line.

I had passed it through the ring of the painter before the bow, and secured it to the seat. This fastening I tore away with one jerk, but there were fifty feet more rope in the coil lying at my feet. To run that out through the ring would require more time than we had, and to row off rapidly with the rope dragging across our bow was impossible, even though many minutes had been to spare.

Feeling very helpless and desperate, I went through

all my pockets for the knife, till it flashed on me that, some time before, it had dropped from the gunwale in which I had stuck it, and was now lying out of reach under the footboard.

Harry now began to cry loudly, calling, "Oh, what will mother do?"

The undulation that precedes a large steamer rocked us. Raising my eyes from a vain endeavor to get a glimpse of the knife, the steamer seemed almost upon us. I never saw a vessel shoulder up so monstrously at the distance! So close was she, that in the twilight I could clearly see the red paint of her run gleaming in the water about her.

With the quick device and lightning activity of despair I seized an oar and, kneeling on the bow, with one downward drive of its handle knocked the staple that secured the ring clear away, and with another motion flung out the coil of rope into the water.

But the bowsprit of the "Theban" was not five seconds away then. I struggled madly to get some headway, hoping to escape the paddle-wheels, but my poor little boy, wild with fear, impeded me by clinging about my legs. Using all my force on the oar as a paddle, I did, however, manage to give her a slight motion up stream, stern first, but too late; the next moment the figurehead and swelling bow of the "Theban" blotted out the sky, and she was upon us.

Not with her cut-water, fortunately, or we should have been instantly smashed down ; it ran out twenty feet beyond us before we were touched. Had she not been half slowed down to take the windings of the channel, we should doubtless have been overwhelmed by the roll of water from her bow ; but somehow the skiff rode this, and the next moment was thrust against the river and crowded so hard against the steamer where she widened that we moved on as if glued to her side.

Obviously, this strange situation could endure but for a few moments, and then my little fellow and I must be drawn under and battered to pulp with the remorseless crash of the paddle-wheel so terrible and so near.

To leap far enough out for escape from them was impossible. I had clasped Harry in my arms with some unreasonable imagination that my interposing body might save him from the crushing blows of the floats. The hope to sink beneath them did not flash among the first crowding thoughts of those despairing moments, not till my glance fell on the fifty-six weight that still lay in the boat.

Instantly I stooped, seized it with my right hand, and, with my little boy close hugged, leaped desperately from the boat into the water.

The sensation of being sucked or trailed through an amazing current, the roar of the battered water, the

overpowering fear of the cruel paddles,—how well I remember! Suddenly—it was as though a wave had flung its mass at me—my legs were swept down with the water driven from the impact of the floats, my hold was nearly jerked from the fifty-six pounds of weight that I held, then down, down, down until the weight touched the rocky bed. I let go and rose through twenty feet of water with a gasp, to see the “Theban” roaring away steadily on her course.

Poor little Harry had never ceased struggling; he struggled more violently as now he caught a half-choked breath. I tore his arms from my neck with a desperate motion as we began to sink again, and turned his back to me. We rose again, treading water. I managed to support his head out of the water long enough to make him understand that he must become perfectly motionless if he wished me to save him.

The poor little man behaved splendidly after that, but by several slight immersions had lost his senses in a half-drowned faint before I managed to get ashore. I had, however, no great difficulty in restoring him. Fortunately there was a house on the Island, and there we spent the night.

You may be sure that I lost no time in investigating the conduct of the “Theban’s” pilot. The man denied all knowledge of the occurrence, and I could see that he was really surprised and shocked; but that he felt

in some degree guilty I could also perceive. Not one of the deck-hands, none of the officers, would confess any knowledge in the matter, and not till the cross-examination of the crew on my suit for damages against the steamboat company did the truth come out. Then a clean breast was made.

The pilot had secretly brought a jug of whisky aboard, and while the captain was below at his tea, the mate and the whole watch, defying all the rules of the company's service, had taken occasion to finish the liquor. As for the pilot, he explained that he had been "too drunk to do more'n steer, sir, and could jest on'y see my landmarks. I took the north channel," he concluded, "because I wanted folks to know that I was puffickly sober."

TOLD ON A PULLMAN

“DON’T take it, did you say? Well, I’m glad I can say that I can take it or leave it, as I please,” and the young fellow who had invited his traveling acquaintance to drink, screwed the flask’s cover down, fitted on its drinking cup, and replaced it in his pocket. “I always carry a little of the right sort, A 1,” he said, with an air of superior worldliness. “Are you a teetotaller, sir?”

“I don’t like the word ‘teetotaller,’ but I never drink. I dare not,” repeated the older man.

On flew the train, the car swaying, the rattle becoming a roar when the door opened, the stillness at stopping places emphasized by the sough of high wind and the beating of rain. Still neither of the men left the smoking compartment of the Pullman car. The younger traveler became absorbed in a bundle of formal-looking letters, over which he smoked a cigar before speaking again.

“It must be late,” he said, looking up. “What! After eleven o’clock? Well, I’ll have another taste and go to my berth. You’re about the most silent companion I’ve fallen in with, sir. Every time I’ve

looked up for two hours I have observed you looking at me seriously. See anything wrong?"

"I have been wondering what your alert face will be like in ten years."

"A regular sober-sides face, you may depend on that. Full of business—that's what I'm going in for."

"Well, I hope it may be. Somehow I find myself taking an extraordinary interest in the question. If you will permit me, I'll tell you why."

"Teetotal story, sir?" said the young man banteringly.

"You might call it that."

"I guess I must have heard it already. Teetotal stories are mighty stale."

"Degradation through drink is a tragedy ever stale, and ever freshly illustrated. I was going to tell you a personal experience."

"You don't look like a reformed drunkard, sir."

"No, I never drank. But I dearly loved one who did. Shall I tell you about him?"

"If it will not be too painful, sir," said the young fellow, moved to sympathy by something in his companion's tone.

"Well, first read a part of a letter I received some time ago," said the older man, taking out a huge pocketbook, in which there were many papers, from which he extracted the letter, and folded this passage down.

The young fellow took it, and read, with a strong sensation of intruding upon private grief :

Ah, my dear fellow, I have three little children and a wife whose childlike and innocent life should have led me to better things. Many a care and many a sorrow she has had since she married me, and many a time, God knows, I've been deeply penitent to have given her cause for grief.

But I have the restless blood of a drunkard in my veins, and it carries me away to dreadful and disgraceful sprees. I promise, I swear off, I protest by all that's good and holy that liquor shall never pass my lips again, but all to no purpose. A craving—a devil—takes possession of me, and after weeks, or even months, of abstention I break out and degrade myself and shame my children, and heap misery on them and my wife.

The old year is closing as I write and the new comes up before me like an enemy—so much do I feel my weakness. That God may close my old life and open a new and better one to me is the cry of my heart to-night ; for if I do not find strength that the past gives me no hope of gaining, before the leaves of next summer wither I shall fill a drunkard's grave and leave my wife and little ones to the mercy of the world.

“Surely the man who wrote that never drank again,” said the young traveler, handing back the page.

“I will tell you,” he said, and then told the story substantially as follows :

That letter was written by my own brother. I had not seen him for several years. He was a lawyer, practising in a place far from me and all of our family. We

had thought of him as a prosperous and happy man. His marriage had set at rest some fears excited by his earlier life. You can understand that that letter was a dreadful shock to me. His reference to the drunkard's blood in his veins had a significance for me that you cannot understand, for on one side of my parentage I come of a family that has suffered beyond telling through the drinking habit. Clever men in it; witty, great-hearted fellows, much loved, popular, eloquent. One was a Supreme Court judge; two were among the foremost orators of their native State. Their fame blazed up in their very youth. It declined just as men began to expect something really great of them. It ended before middle age in drunkenness and death.

On the other side, my relatives are steady-going people without any brilliant qualities. I take after them, and remembering the others, I have never dared to taste liquor.

But my brother did dare. You remember your expression awhile ago, "I am glad I can say that I can take it, or leave it alone, as I please." How often I had heard the very words and tone from poor Randal. Just about your age he must have been when he used to meet my expostulations by that perennial boast of young men.

"What's the use of telling me about my uncles, Fred?" he would say. "They craved liquor. I never

touch it, except for the sake of a little jollity. I can take it, or leave it, as I please."

But I'll not weary you by details of his youthful escapades. As I said, we believed him to have turned over a new leaf after his marriage in a distant State. He brought his wife home to us for a few weeks, a lovely, golden-haired young creature. Well! well! no use telling about that. He had "finally sworn off" then, and they were very happy. After that I knew no more of him than that he reported, in occasional letters, the growth of his family and prosperity. The sad letter which you have read came after a wide gap in our correspondence. I instantly determined to make time for a long visit to him, and wrote him to that effect. He responded joyfully, and in early summer I made the journey.

On arriving at the village I was surprised that he did not meet me. Inquiring where Randal's office was, the stationmaster told me that he would not probably be at his office that day; "he was a little out of sorts," the man had heard. I would find him at home; it wasn't far; and the railway man gave me directions.

Following them I walked on through a pretty little town of comfortable brick houses and shady, sandy streets, a most peaceful place. Reaching its outskirts as instructed, I soon faced a handsome house with an extensive lawn in front, well kept, with flower beds and many evidences of care.

I had associated my brother's confession with the drunkenness seen in my own town, and imagined him as having become miserably poor ; hence I was a good deal relieved by the appearance of prosperity about his residence.

"Pooh!" I said to myself, going up the gravel path, "he has exaggerated his vice. No doubt he had taken too much about Christmas time, and was suffering from a bad headache in consequence."

As I approached it struck me as rather strange that no one was to be seen about the house. I observed that the garden ran far back to a cedar wood or swamp, and from this wood I thought I heard faint shouts.

I ascended the veranda steps. Not a face appeared at the windows. As I rang the bell, I heard a child crying within. With the faint jangle that came to me the cry ceased. I stood expectant. The child again began its wail, but no one came. I rang again and again. With each sound of the bell the child's voice ceased, to rise again as the tinkle died away. Much puzzled, I went around to the rear wing.

The kitchen door stood wide open, a bright fire was in the stove, there were dishes unwashed and food in course of preparation, but no servants. Entering, I looked into three comfortable rooms, finding no person. In the fourth, a large sitting room, a very little girl sat in the middle of the floor, surrounded by toys. I knew at once that she must be little Flora, my brother's

youngest, his pet, being the youngest girl, a baby of something more than two years.

She looked up at me, round-eyed with wonder. "Is this little Flora?" I asked.

"I's papa's little girl," she answered, very distinctly. "Papa! papa!" and she began to cry again.

Unwilling though she was, I took her in my arms and soon managed to soothe her by the ticking of my watch. Then I carried her through every room in the house without finding another soul.

Trying in vain to account for the desertion, I returned downstairs and to the kitchen. As I reached it, two small boys came in, little Randal and Fred. I knew them from photographs.

They stared at me with alarm. Both had been crying, I could see. When I told them I was Uncle Fred they came to me shyly.

"And where are papa and mamma?" I asked.

The little fellows hung their heads. "Papa is sick," said Randal, the elder, hesitatingly.

"But where is he?"

"He got up and ran out," said the poor little man, raising a chubby hand to his eyes.

"And where are mamma and all the rest?"

"Mamma didn't know papa had gone till he was near into the woods," he said, pointing to the rear of the garden, "and then she ran after him, and she called Kitty and Jane and Thomas, and we ran after

them, and they sent us home to take care of the baby. They can't find papa, and he's lost," so my little nephew explained through his sobs.

Scarcely had he done speaking when a man appeared at the edge of the wood, and soon afterward a group following him. Then he stopped, turned, and shook his fist at them.

"Go 'way ! Lemme alone ! Don' come near me !" and I recognized my brother's voice.

Those who followed seemed either to fear or to humor him, for they kept their distance. On he came, tumbling over the fence into the garden. Then he picked himself up, reeled, steadied himself, lurched forward again, and sometimes running, but always keeping his feet, approached me.

The boys, crying and shuddering, stood clutching me till he was two-thirds of the way up the garden.

"Come, Freddy," said little Randal with a sudden recollection, "we mustn't see papa when he's sick," and led the other in.

It was the most piteous child's voice—the most piteous thing—those two little lads, fond and ashamed of their own father !

He came on, not noticing me till within a few paces. He was unshod and only half clad, just as he had run out in semi-delirium, and had been staggering through mud and water.

At last he stopped, looked at me in evident recog-

nition, trying to control his swayings ; then, as if unconscious of any shame, came toward me.

“It’s you, Fred. When’d you come? Why din’ you lemme know, Fred?”

His hand closed like a vise on mine ; his whole strength—and he was a very large, powerful man—seemed to fly to his fingers, but they trembled as he grasped my hand.

I could not speak. He looked stupidly into my face, with half-open, bloodshot eyes, for a few moments ; then, ignoring me as completely as if I had been always there, reached out his arms for Florry.

“Come to papa—thass papa’s dear li’l girl.” At his husky, affectionate, distressing voice I strained the child closer, but she held out her arms to him, and staggering forward, he grasped her.

Kissing and fondling little Florence, he entered the kitchen and cautiously ascended the steps leading to the hall. I kept my hand on his arm, and of this support he seemed wholly unconscious. It was plain that his debauch had been a long one, for his hair was neglected, his beard of a week’s growth.

My brother fell into a chair, still fondling his little daughter, and looked dumbly around. I seemed no more to him than any senseless object in the room. To me, this sodden, silent man was as one I had never known, so changed was his from the bright, alert face of which yours has reminded me.

Soon I heard voices, and left the room to meet my brother's wife. Poor Lucy! I was ashamed to meet her, ashamed that she should know that I had seen him; I wished that I could have escaped unobserved. Little did I know how far the poor girl was past vain efforts to conceal her husband's vice.

She came silently to me, unsurprised—not to be surprised by anything in life. Her fair hair, that I remembered as seeming blown about her flower-like face, was smooth and lank each side her forehead. She was very pale, and oh, how old she looked! Her eyes—they give tragedy to black-eyed women—I could not have believed that such settled misery could over look forth from eyes of blue. She did not weep, she did not speak. Holding my hand, she only looked at me with those hopeless eyes.

Seeing us, the servant who had entered went back and closed the door. Then the little boys stole softly down, hand in hand, averting their looks of shame from the room where their father sat, and, standing by their mother, covered their faces in her skirts.

Not a word was uttered in the group, and the hall clock above us ticked and ticked its strokes of doom. We could hear the unconscious baby crowing, and my brother's affectionate mumbling to her.

“Papa's li'l girl—papa's dear li'l baby girl.”

Sir, I don't think I can tell you the rest. Oh, well, we stood for some little time, listening. Then my

brother said, coaxingly, "Papa 'll leave dear li'l girl down, 'n go'n see li'l girl's Uncle Fred." At the same time he rose, and we entered.

"Let me take the baby, Randal," said Lucy, very gently.

"Go 'way, Lucy dear ! Mus'n't in'fere with baby," he expostulated with drunken, not unkindly gravity.

"But you want to go upstairs, don't you, Randal dear?"

"Yes, I wan' to go 'pstairs. Go'n' set baby down firs', 'n' give her toys. You oughtn't take baby, Lucy; she's too heavy—must take care not hurt yourself, Lucy." The survival of his affection through his degradation, seemed somehow more heart-breaking than violence from him would have been.

I did not think he could set the child down, but refusing to be assisted in the least, he stooped very carefully, though swaying a little, and placed her again among her playthings on the floor. For a few moments he stood leaning, smiling down on her drunkenly, fumbling his fingers without sound in attempting to snap them for her amusement. The child looked up into his face, and held out her arms.

"Baby want to kiss papa," he said in a gratified tone, and stooped lower. And then, before either of us could reach him, he fell forward full length, his whole weight crushing little Florry down.

She cried out, and seemed to smother. The next

instant he had rolled aside, and there the little, lovely child lay, bleeding at the mouth.

The poor mother, with a shriek, lifted her baby to her heart. It sighed, sighed—and lay still. Randal, by my aid, had reached his feet. The struggling fear, hope, and horror of his face I shall never forget!

“Baby!” he said, stooping down. “Baby, look at papa. Baby—just once—look at papa. O my God! Lucy, have I killed my little baby girl?”

Even so it was, for little Florry never held out her arms to him again. The mother—but I need not describe the anguish of that household. We hardly knew when my brother recovered from the insanity of liquor, for it was followed by the delirium of brain fever. There he lay for a fortnight, talking constantly of Florry, and when consciousness returned still lay there, exhausted, silent, a mere wreck, often crying dumbly. Two months elapsed before he left his room.

Sir, he swore he never would touch liquor again, swore it, as his letter says, by all that was good and holy. And even between his protests, he said to me, “I can’t keep from it, Fred, I can’t—it’s too strong for me.” I could not believe that he judged truly of his weakness, but he knew it too well—it was no longer for him to take it or leave it alone.

One day, when we believed him safe at his office, he entered the house, looking, I thought, remarkably well.

But when Lucy saw his face, she sprang up with a bitter, trembling cry. He stood, as if listening, at the door of the room, looking in.

"Lucy, where's little Florry? I want to take her out with me," he said in a perfectly natural voice.

Though quite steady on his legs, and with perfect control of his utterances, he had drunk himself into absolute forgetfulness!

And from that day out he could not be restrained. He *would* have liquor. Again and again he escaped from the room in which we tried to confine him. His cunning and agility were preternatural. The demon that he had dared to trifle with never left him afterward, and, at last, searching for him after an escape in the night, we found him half-naked, face down, quite dead, in a ditch.

And now I ask you whether I can credit any man who says of liquor that he "can take it, or leave it alone"?

The young traveler made no answer except that he took from his pocket the flask which had led to the story, and poured its A 1 contents into the wash-basin of that Pullman car.

THE HOLE IN THE WALL

BETWEEN Michipicoten and Nepigon Bays the north shore of Lake Superior erects an ironlike front against waves scarcely less enormous than the vastest of the ocean. They whelm up before a gale from the south with the unchecked oscillation of one hundred and fifty miles, to swing upon that high-walled coast with a massy and solemn force more appalling than the fury of breakers.

So deep, commonly, is the water at the foot of the cliffs that no vessel can hope to find near them a secure anchorage against a gale driving on the heights. Harbors there are none; islands affording shelter are far apart; and the north shore is altogether so dangerous that lake captains shun it when they can.

Because we knew all this on board the big steam-yacht "Trampler," Captain Lount dropped anchor in the lee of the Slate Islands on the evening of August ninth. He might have run on eastward that night to Michipicoten, but there was no telling what weather might come before morning. In the heated term that side of Lake Superior is often swept by such cyclonic squalls as work havoc on the Atlantic coast at the same season.

George Crombie and his three guests cared little whether the "Trampler" stopped for the night or steamed on. We were four rather reckless students who had been up the Nepigon River trout-fishing for ten days, while the big yacht, owned by George's father, lay waiting for us at the Hudson Bay Company's crazy wharf at Red Rock. Now we were, day after day, enjoying most fascinating fly-fishing in lake water, under the towering cliffs of the main shore.

Joe Wislemkoom, one of our Ojibway guides, was delighted with the "Trampler's" halt at the Slate Islands; indeed he liked nothing better than halting, except fishing, shooting, and eating, yet he responded to orders with great alacrity. Whenever we halted, Joe generally reposed, in accordance with the Indian maxim, "Walking is better than running, standing is better than walking, sitting is better than standing, and lying down is better than sitting."

"Good bully man you for stop!" Joe said to Captain Lount. "Catchum big trout to-morrow. Two gemplen fish by him big steamboat all 'round islands. Oder two gemplen take little steamboat—take canoe—come with Joe Wislemkoom. Me show him Hole in de Wall—big trout—long your arm, mebbey."

In compliance with this suggestion, Mandeville Merritt and George Shepley stayed at the islands next morning, while Crombie and I took a canoe with the steam-launch and headed northeastward.

"If the Hole in the Wall is where Joe says it is," said Captain Lount, "you ought to get back to-night, if nothing goes wrong with the launch or the weather."

"Oh, yes, we'll probably be back before dark," said Crombie. "But if there's much wind we'll stay in the Hole in the Wall. Joe says there's good shelter there."

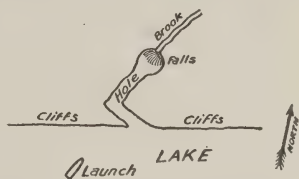
"I've always heard so, but I've never seen the place," said Lount. "The trouble is to find it; but I've no doubt Joe can do that. Shall I run over for you with the yacht in the morning in case you don't turn up before?"

"You'd better," said Crombie. "We'll steam out into the lake and expect to see you about eight o'clock or so."

As we scuttled away at six o'clock, with a full camp kit stored partly in the launch and partly in the towed canoe, the morning was clear and calm. The Hole, Joe thought, was not more than twenty miles away; by nine o'clock we should be well within its shelter. No sign of danger was in the sky, for the air seemed no more sultry than it had been for several days.

Crombie, a bit of a mechanician, liked to run the launch himself. Perhaps he was too fond of crowding on steam; perhaps there had been an unsuspected flaw in the machinery; at any rate, there was a sudden clatter of broken irons, and the screw stopped when we were about half a mile from the north shore cliffs.

I was then in the bow with Joe Wislemkoom, scanning the coast, which rose brown like an iron wall fully four hundred feet high. Joe had begun to look carefully for the Hole in the Wall, which joined the lake in such a manner, he said, that the Hole would not be seen till we were close to it. He had drawn a rude diagram in my note-book, which I pocketed on hearing the crash.



"What's the row?" I asked turning to Crombie.

"Oh, just something wrong," he answered crossly.

"Leave me alone. I'll fix it in a minute."

As nothing exasperated this amateur mechanic more than to be overlooked while trying to right some of the numerous "wrongs" that occurred under his dealing with machinery, I turned again to the cliffs.

No birds winged about that treeless and stern desolation except a few white-paper-like gulls that seemed to be fishing at one point on the cliff's foot. No sound disturbed the great silence except Crombie's angry tinkering. Lake Superior's clear green lay so calm that no motion of the little launch was perceptible except when it swayed with Crombie's movements from side to side. The canoe lay at an unvarying distance of about twelve feet from us, though the least zephyr would have kept it swinging at its rope's end.

"Mebby Hole in Wall?" said Joe Wislemkoom,

doubtfully, pointing to the gulls. "Long time since I be here—my fader'n me. Gull fly all same way by Hole den."

"Couldn't you see the Hole from this distance?"

"No—him look all same like wall till near, near. Don't see no more gull nowhere," and he gazed eastward and westward.

"Well, perhaps it's the place," I said.

"Mebby—only de rock no look same like I'll rememb' by gull. Wall look like he been rub long 'way up."

"Your eyes must be better than mine, Joe."

"For sure better. You no see like tree by gull?"

"No, I don't see the least sign of a tree anywhere about there."

"Tree dere all same—no branch on him—not big tree. You want see him? Mebby, if take canoe, you'n me see Hole."

"Do, for goodness sake take the canoe and go!" said Crombie. "You can whip that water while I'm fixing things. It may take me an hour. I'd sooner you'd go. Perhaps we'll be here till noon, and some fresh trout would go well for lunch."

Joe and I promptly got into the canoe, which contained a bell tent, two long-handled hatchets, and a kit for camp-cooking. All our provisions were in the lockers of the launch. So short was the distance to shore that I never thought of lightening the canoe, nor

putting food aboard it. With a bamboo rod and a landing-net beside me I grasped the bow paddle, and away we shot toward the gulls.

“Yes, b’gum! Hole in Wall. Look!” cried Joe, at a quarter of a mile from shore.

Directly in our front was what looked like a narrow discoloration extending from the water to the top of the cliff. As we went nearer, I saw this to be caused by a sharp indentation of part of the wall. In this gap water was soon visible, and then the break of the cliff’s sky line could be seen.

Not far from the west corner of the gap, but on the lake face of the cliff, flew the gulls, somewhat disturbed by our approach. Beneath them could be seen such a scuttling of fish as alewives make on the sea coast. We knew that thousands of trout were playing there on some small, hidden protrusion of rock, but Joe seemed unconcerned about them. He was gazing, open-mouthed, at the traces of man’s work on the cliff.

A tall cedar, with stubs of branches left, as if to assist men in climbing, stood against the precipice. Its foot was in water. Its top went up full sixty feet to what could scarcely be called a ledge. On both sides of the cedar, and as far upward as we could see, the face of the cliff had been cleared of mosses and lichens for a space some twenty-five feet wide.

“What for? Who make?” asked Joe, as if not only puzzled but alarmed.

"Beats me, Joe," I said. "Looks as if men had been hauling something up the wall here."

In fact, as I learned later, a Canadian Pacific Railway contractor had fixed a windlass on the cliff top three years earlier and hauled up telegraph poles there. The raft of poles had been towed into the Hole in the Wall for shelter from storms, and brought by small cribs to this point, which was most convenient for lifting the sticks.

Nothing remained of the contractor's work except the cedar tree which had been fixed there to afford men working at the water's edge a means of ascending to a safe standing-place in case of sudden storms. It was clamped by iron bands and nuts to screw-headed bolts wedged firmly into holes drilled on the cliff's face. Thus that unrotting timber had endured the beating of three years' storms, though it was deeply dented and somewhat shredded by the pounding of ice.

The thing was so mysterious to Joe and me that we resolved to examine it thoroughly before casting a fly among the throngs of trout. So we tied the bow of the canoe to the foot of the cedar, pulled thick folds of the tent over the bark sides to protect them from rubbing on the face of the cliff, and then climbed the iron-clamped tree.

Near its top we stepped off upon a sort of rough-topped rock platform, which could have afforded stand-

ing-room to forty men. Above this the cliff leaned very slightly inward, but presented no sign of another standing-place above us, so far as we could see.

As there was nothing of interest on the rock platform except some granite shards and sand, which marked where a fire had long burned, I was turning to gaze at the blue-green endless expanse of Superior, when Joe broke into a cry of alarm.

“Murdy—see wind!” he shouted.

When I had last looked seaward there was not even a cloud as big as a man’s hand. Now, perhaps ten minutes later, an amazing, wraithlike, white mass was hurtling, through sunshine, from the south.

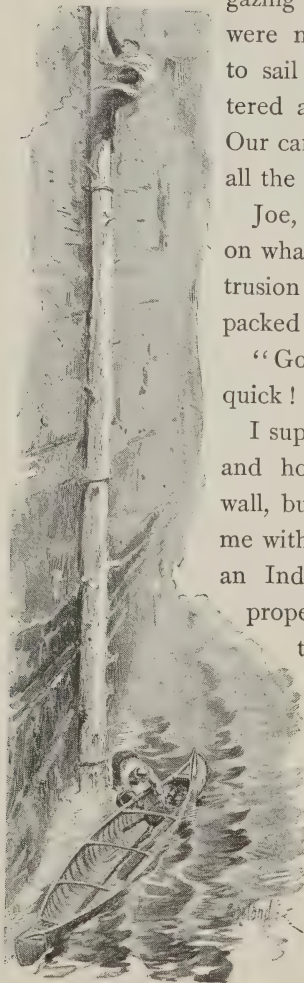
“Down, quick! Let’s get back to Crombie!” I shouted, seizing the cedar’s top.

“No—no good—save canoe!” said Joe.

The squall was traveling at a rate so prodigious that it seemed already to have leaped half-way to the launch, where we could still hear Crombie absorbed in his hammering. I yelled at him, but he gave no sign of hearing. It was plain that our canoe would go under in an attempt to reach him. Could the launch, without power of motion, weather the shortest hurricane?

“Canoe—save canoe!” said Joe again.

As he climbed down, and I after him, cool puffs stirred the water below us. I glanced at the launch; it was already dancing, and Crombie was standing



gazing at the coming fury. The gulls were now flying far overhead, as if to sail inland and avoid being battered against the cliff by the blast. Our canoe was rocking violently, and all the scurrying of trout had ceased.

Joe, standing in two feet of water on what was a narrow, rounding protrusion of rock, pulled up the tent, packed it on my back, and cried :

“Go up—quick—come down—quick ! Mebbe save canoe, too.”

I supposed he meant to stay below and hold it from battering on the wall, but I heard him clattering after me with the cooking-kit and axes, for an Indian hates to abandon such property. He threw the things on the standing-place and turned to go down. Perhaps our united strength could haul up the light canoe.

But now the squall was on us. It had totally hidden the launch. It seemed to scoop up water and drive heavy spray on the fierce edge of its wind. I was lit-

erally forced back to the wall. There the blast soon "banked" and left a space now still, now of furious wind eddies. Fearful of being blown off sideways, I lay down just as Joe stumbled and fell beside me.

There we crouched in such a demoniac shrieking of the elements as I have never elsewhere heard. Soon a slash of cold water doused us. It seemed incredible that wave crests could have so suddenly leaped so high, but we were drenched again and again before the mist or rack of the storm let us see anything of the lake once more.

Its waters were tumbling far below us in waves of amazing volume, whose crests were being swept off and whirled high, as if carried by an upward slant of the wind rising to go over the precipice. Swift masses of cold water continued to be launched at us as if from the sky. So thick was the air with spume that I could see the terrible face of the deep only at intervals, and yet the whole scene was now again illuminated by the high sun's pouring of rays through the flying scud.

Twenty minutes more and the tempest had passed, but there was still a high wind. The spume fell out of the air; the waves began rolling out of confusion into regular march; crests no longer drenched us. We stood up and looked for Crombie. Not a trace of the launch could be seen.

"Mebbe little steamboat blow in by Hole in Wall," said Joe, peering to the eastward.

But the Hole, though within a hundred yards of us, was completely hidden by the cliff. We could see no sign of the gap except that the water before it did not surge high and fall back in a huge returning wave. I fancied that a certain set of crests indicated the current that must be running into the Hole with so sudden a lifting of the lake's north side. I even imagined that Crombie might have clung to the bulkheaded launch, after its inevitable rolling over, and been drawn into the calm shelter beyond.

But a steady gaze downward scattered all my hopes. Some fragments of our canoe were being thrashed to and fro with the rope which had tied it to the cedar. But more than the canoe tossed there.

"Little steamboat!" gasped Joe, and descended twenty feet. He returned quickly, looking horrified.

"Broke all to pieces," he said. "Come in right here. Poor Misser Crombie! He was good bully-kind man—good to Indian all time, all time."

Two hours later, when wind and sea had gone down, we were able to descend and stand once more on the little shoal place. Thousands of trout were again scuttling around there, quite regardless of the boiler of the launch, which had been thrown upon the protruding rock and battered almost to pieces against the precipice. Little else of her wreckage was to be seen, though she must have come in bodily and gone to pieces right below our perch. I climbed back to it,

imagining poor Crombie's body streaming along in the clear undercurrents, among companies of inquisitive fish.

For hours I sat silently beside Joe, gazing wofully at the calm spread of Superior. Sunset came, gilding, reddening, empurpling, and miraging the interminable expanse. Very slowly the August darkness drew over the face of the deep. The light of moon and stars showed us dimly the barriers of our prison. There were one hundred and fifty miles of water to the south, and four hundred feet of cliff at our backs.

Hunger made us the more wakeful, but we could endure fasting well enough till the time set for the "Trampler's" coming to seek us next morning.

"S'pose big steamboat sink in storm, too?" asked Joe, suddenly voicing my fears.

"Then we'll be done for," I said.

"You mean we starve?" said Joe.

"Or drown ourselves," said I.

"No starve," he replied composedly. "No drown ourself. But starve bad way for die. I sooner be kill dead, me."

With grief for Crombie, who was the only child of his parents, with heartsick imaginings of their woe over his death; with keen though unreasonable self-blame for having left him in the launch; with fear that the "Trampler" had gone down with my other comrades; and with bewildered speculations as to how Joe and I

could escape from the cliff without any sort of boat, I lay gazing at the stars and moon in sky and water long after the Indian was sleeping soundly. We sat rather than lay close together, with folds of the tent under and over us, for the August night was cool beside that vast cold lake.

It was quarter to two in the morning by my watch when I was roused from dozing by the long shriek of a steam whistle.

“Big steamboat!” exclaimed Joe, wakening with a snort. “No—what?” for the note was unfamiliar, and came to us as if from over the cliff.

“Not the ‘Trampler,’ anyway,” I said. Just then another long whistle of a different tone came as from the sky. “Oh, now I know! Those are two railway trains passing near here. The Canadian Pacific Railway runs only one train a day each way, and they meet near here in the night. The road can’t be more than a mile back of the cliff top.”

“So! S’pose we go on him cars?” said Joe, with a sort of hopeless derision, and then calmly went to sleep again, while my brain, partly deadened by dozing, wove fantastic plans for an ascent to the railway track.

By six o’clock in the morning we were keenly watching the southwestward horizon, hoping to see the “Trampler” emerging from the slow wraiths of mist that clung to the water. But nine o’clock passed

without sight or sound of her. Then we were quite sure she had been caught steaming on the windward of the islands and sunk by the tornado of yesterday.

There was no hope that another vessel of any kind would be soon seen on that little-frequented coast. To leave the cliff or ascend it seemed equally impossible. Indeed, death seemed so inevitable that my mind ceased entirely to work on the problem of escape till about noon. Then, as occurred at each meal time, the pangs of hunger were very painful and suggestive. I had chewed some pieces cut from the tent and was going down the cedar for a drink of water, when it occurred to me that we might loosen the tree from its iron clamps, pull it up, lay its top against the cliff and ascend its length above our standing-place.

Possibly there might be another standing-place over our heads. We had seen none from below, but I knew that it is difficult to distinguish small indentations on the face of brown granite cliffs. It was conceivable that we might use the cedar to rise from standing-place to standing-place and so surmount the cliff; but Joe laughed with derision when I explained the idea.

"Cedar not heavy wood—no," he said. "But four men not lift him—too big." This was true, for the cedar was fully a foot in diameter at the butt.

"We could split it, Joe," said I, looking at the axes.

"Split easy—cedar good for split—but him fastened."

“Knock the nuts around and loosen the tree.”

“Hey! Yes—by gum!” exclaimed Joe. “We split him—we tie him pieces togedder on end—climb up, mebbby.”

At this he sprang to his feet with elation, but at once began to laugh again.

“Big fool, Joe Wislemkoom,” he said. “How we lift him long if can’t lift him short?”

“But you don’t quite understand the plan, Joe. I don’t mean to tie the pieces together by the ends. We can lift a split length and go up on it, and perhaps find one standing-place after another to the top.”

“We ^{*}split him easy,” exclaimed Joe, at once adopting the idea and going to work.

It was the work of half an hour to knock the nuts off the rock bolts, loosen the clamps and let the cedar fall. We stood on the little shoal below, cut some poor wedges from the butt, and contrived to split the trunk into six almost equal pieces before two o’clock.

Then, with little difficulty, we stood the six pieces on end side by side. At the tips they were little more than two-thirds of ordinary fence-rail size, and therefore were withy. Nevertheless, they easily supported Joe as he climbed up to the dry standing-place again, using for footholds the stubs of branches which we had been careful to save as far as possible.

I went up after Joe, while he held the tips, and we

stood again together more than fifty feet above the lake, but not now hopeless of escape, though the enterprise was of the most desperate nature. There might be no standing-place within reach above us, and if there were many, our venture would become more perilous by climbing to each in succession.

Nothing but the feeling of certainty that ascent or starvation were our alternatives nerved us for the danger. It must be encountered at once, lest our strength should quite depart by hunger. So we pulled up two pieces of the cedar and let their tops touch the wall as we raised them straight above us.

When their butts were firmly placed Joe prepared to ascend again. But now a new idea struck me as my eye happened to fall on the tent-ropes.

“Let us make a ladder, Joe.”

“How make ladder? Nossin make him wis.”

“Pull up a third stick. Cut short pieces from it. Tie them to two side pieces by the tent-ropes.”

“Good bully man you!” said Joe, and went to work eagerly on the plan.

We tied a crosspiece between the butts, another three feet higher, a third about the height of our heads. Joe stood on this, tied a fourth, ascended and tied a fifth, and so rose till he was forty feet above me. Then he stepped off with a cry of delight on another standing-place, above which the withy tips of the ladder had protruded without our seeing this from below.

“No—you not come. I make more ladder first,” shouted Joe, when I called to him to hold the tips for my ascent.

So out he came again with his ropes to tie on more rungs—which almost brought us to destruction.

The tips were now unsupported by the wall, for the ladder, at about forty feet above me, rested against the second standing-place. With some sudden movement of Joe’s on the upper part, both butts sprang outward quickly. Another six inches and they would have been off my standing place. I flung myself down to get a lower grip, clung desperately, and screamed, “Joe, come down !”

He sprang before my words reached him and safely reached the rounding shelf near him, but his jump was so sudden as to spring the tips outward. It seemed that the ladder must fall backward. I jumped up to get a higher grip. I pulled hard, but I knew I was pulling in vain. I dared not lean out farther, and was about to let go, when the ladder’s slant was suddenly reversed. Joe had flung a tent rope so cleverly that the wooden “clamp” at its end had whirled round one side of the ladder and practically tied the rope, so that he could jerk the ladder back to him.

Again he held the tips while I ascended. We now stood about ninety feet above the gulls, which had resumed their fishing below, but it seemed improbable that we could go any higher.

This standing-place was more truly a ledge than that which we had left below, but it was much narrower, and its top rounded outward and downward. The difficulty was to find a spot where the ladder would stand under a man's weight. To give it a sufficient slant inward would be to place the butts half-way out on the rounding slope. This had, indeed, a rough surface, but I dreaded lest the springing of the ladder under Joe should throw it from its hold.

But desperate exigencies force men to desperate trials. We lifted the ladder ; we set it against the wall ; I crouched at its butts and clasped them. Once more Joe went up safely, and now stood almost sixty feet above me.

Up to this time giddiness had not troubled me ; but no sooner did I begin to climb after Joe than fear came cold to my heart. There was now, I reflected, nothing to prevent the butts slipping except their friction and Joe's insecure hold on the withy tips.

Instead of waiting to get control of my nerves, I pressed upward in an access of nervous excitement. The enormous mass of the precipice now weighed on my wild imagination, and I quivered on the quivering ladder. Throwing back my head to look up at Joe, I saw the face of the cliff rising, it seemed, to the infinite blue. There I stopped, while a deepened sense of the horrors of the venture astonished my reeling brain.

Perhaps faintness from hunger brought the giddiness. The void behind me swooned, I felt, with expectancy of my fall. Still I clung to the ladder ; all my remaining sanity was as if centered in my grasping hands. They held me, though my



arms were extended at full length and my body leaning backward from the feet.

I could no longer control the muscles of my neck. My head fell backward limply, as I heard Joe shriek at me some words that I did not distinguish. Echoes of his voice seemed to come from the water. I clutched

harder ; the faint feeling passed ; I vehemently pulled to bring my front close to the ladder again.

At that sudden jerk the butts moved ; the full strain of the ladder and my weight came on Joe's hands. For one moment I was aware that the tips ran pressing

against the wall as the butts shot outward ; then I was launched through the air, as if face down and feet first on a toboggan, into the deep of Lake Superior.

Souse ! And still I clung to the ladder. It must have much broken the force of my fall, for I felt neither battered nor breathless. For only a few seconds was I under ; then my head was in air, and I floating easily on the ladder.

“There—there he is !” I heard shouting near me, and then splashing oars. Turning I saw Captain Lount and four men in the “Trampler’s” gig.

“Are you hurt ?” shouted Lount.

“No, I’m all right.”

“Where’s Mr. Crombie and the launch ?”

“Dead—sunk !” I cried ; and being hauled aboard, explained the yesterday’s disaster.

“It’s terrible—terrible !” said Lount. “How am I to face his father ? Why did I give in to the boy ? He would run that launch himself !”

“Where’s the ‘Trampler’ ?” I asked.

“The ‘Trampler’s’ ashore in the lee of the Slate Islands. I was caught outside in that infernal squall, and ran around in the mist of it till her nose went on a shoal. We’ll get her off all right, though. I sent two men up to Red Rock for a tug this morning, and then pulled over to look you up.

“Queer we didn’t see you,” said I.

“I didn’t see you till we were right here. We

pulled close to the face of the cliff, fearing to miss the Hole in the Wall. Where is it?"

"Just there—not a hundred yards away."

"Well, I'll take a look at it. Pull away, boys."

"But Joe!" said I. "We've got to get him off," and I looked up to the poor fellow, more than a hundred and fifty feet above us.

"Oh, I forgot Joe. Joe, how are you going to get down?" shouted Lount.

"Do' know. Jump, if I got to."

As he yelled, he swung the three tent-ropes still remaining in his hand.

"What's he got in his hand?" Lount asked me. "Ropes, eh? Oh, then we'll get him down all right. I fetched a lot of tools and rope, in case something had gone wrong with the launch."

"Joe!" he shouted. "Untwist those ropes, then tie the pieces together—you understand?—make long cord."

"No good," shouted Joe. "Can't come down all same."

"Not on that rope; but I'll send you up another when you give me the end of the long cord you'll make."

"No good—no way for tie rope here."

"I'll send you up a cold chisel and a hammer. You'll drill a hole and leave the chisel in it to hold the rope end. Do you understand me?"

“Good bully man you !” shouted Joe, in his favorite expression of approval.

He was saved after about an hour and a half of work, and still the sun was an hour high.

“While we’re here,” said Lount, “we may as well have a look into the Hole in the Wall,” and away we went, while Joe was devouring food with savage satisfaction.

The Hole in the Wall ! Conceive a canal sixty feet wide, between granite walls four hundred feet high. Imagine the chasm to turn sharply to the left at less than a hundred yards from the lake front, and then, less sharply, to the right within sixty yards farther. Conceive this turn to disclose a straight waterway a quarter of a mile in length, and terminating in a sheer waterfall or spray fall four hundred feet high. Such is the Hole in the Wall.

But there was something more amazing than the singular cleft itself. As we neared the fall I saw in the dim chasm what I verily believed, for a full minute, to be the ghost of poor Crombie. The figure was bare-headed, but otherwise fully clad. It moved to and fro on a low foreshore near the spray fall, and seemed wringing its hands in distraction.

“Crombie ! Crombie ! Is it you ?” I screamed.

I suppose the sound of our oars had been previously drowned by the noise of the cataract. At my voice he turned, and instantly took a composed air.

“Certainly it’s me,” said Crombie ; “or I, if you insist on having a starved man grammatical. Can’t you see? Have you got any grub aboard?”

“How on earth did you get here?”

“Swept in by the wind and current yesterday,” he said. “Hurry up with that grub.”

“When I saw the squall coming,” said he, between mouthfuls, as we rowed for the Slate Islands, “I put on three cork jackets. In about five minutes the sea swamped her, and I just tried to swim against the waves. It didn’t seem a very long time before I found myself being hurried along by a current between high cliffs, and I knew I must be in the Hole in the Wall. There I’ve been ever since. The trouble was to find a landing-place. But the water was quite calm inside, and at last I got to where you found me. There I took off all my clothes, dried them, put them on and waited. Now tell me what you and Joe did on the cliff, for I’m sure your canoe was smashed, or else you’d have gone exploring for my remains.”

AN INCIDENT AT THE WORLD'S FAIR

MAUD BRUCE, of our party at the World's Columbian Fair, returned to our lodgings one August evening with shining eyes. Truly they do always shine, but this shining, or perhaps a telltale flush of divine pity on her fair face, seemed of peculiar significance to those who know her best. Up spoke her aunt, Miss Forsyth :

“Who is it, Maud?—for I'm sure you've been giving charity to somebody. Fancy! she's found a deserving person in Chicago!” and the old maiden lady looked around on us with affected amazement.

Maud, I may as well say here, is nineteen. Her brother John, who is at once a sportsman and a bit of a poet, has described her on two occasions in my hearing. Once he said she was smart as a weasel and soft as mush ; the other time he spoke very tenderly : “She goes through our coarse world blessing it by her pure looks, her gentle presence, her flowing goodness. She's a sort of modern heavenly Una, without any milk-white lamb. But Maud's smart, mind you,” ended John, as if in vindication.

Well, this young lady has an independent income so large that she might almost be called rich. It came to her but a year ago, no matter how, after she had taught school for ten months. This occupation pleased her so well that she seriously thought of continuing it.

"But finally," says John, "she concluded to devote the rest of her life and most of her money to deserving persons; washerwomen with drunken husbands, newsboys with delicate lungs, one-legged veterans, and so on. You bet none of them fool her, either. She soon detects humbugs—oh, yes, Maud's smart. Won't lend me a dollar; says I'm too extravagant."

When I add that Miss Maud is quite brave, most ingenious, energetic, indomitable, and that nobody belonging to her ever thinks that she is not capable of going alone and safely in the worst quarters of the North End of Boston, you may understand that she "flew round the great exhibition on her own hook," as John said, pretty much as matter of course.

"None of us can see anything satisfactorily if we go mumpsing round together, like a party of sheep," said Maud. This was true, and our habit was to scatter on entering the grounds, go each as we pleased all day, and meet in the evening for dinner, either on the Plaisance or at our lodgings, as might be previously agreed.

We were lodging at Cobb Hall, Chicago University, just across Fifty-ninth Street from the Plaisance, and almost opposite the great Ferris Wheel.

Maud, at her aunt's quizzing question, smiled happily, but stood silent, with an air of having been detected, for she does not love to boast of her good designs ; but now she was almost too full of her new idea to conceal it.

"Come now, Maud, own up like a little man," said John. "Who is it? You've been giving money away to somebody—though you know how sorely I need some diamonds and other trifles like those at Tiffany's show in the Liberal Arts Building."

"Nonsense, Jack," said Maud.

"Oh come, sis, don't hide your light under a bushel. Who was he? What were his name and station, age and race? Or was it a she? If so, how old? Was she very ragged? Had she more than one borrowed baby for the occasion? Or did she say her mother was ninety-two, without a soul to help her, and she bed-ridden, with a large washing to do this afternoon? Come, own up—give us all the particulars of the robbery. Who plundered you?"

"He wouldn't take any," said Maud, blushing.

"He! Oh, is it that interesting young divinity student that waits on our table downstairs? Well, that beats my time. Think of a divinity student——"

"Jack! As if I would dare to offer him money! Dear me, I wish it wouldn't hurt his feelings, though! It would be so good to help him through his course!"

"Who, then?" asked her aunt.

"Well, nobody," said Maud, affecting pettishness.

"Or, if you must know all about it, his name is Adam Franks."

"Who on earth is Adam Franks?"

"Why, that boy who usually drives us down to the Intramural entrance. He's never been inside the fairgrounds! Hadn't you even found out his name?"

"Pooh, no! Catch me asking him questions—that grumpy fellow!" said John. "I didn't think he could say anything except 'Fare ten cents' and 'G'lang!'"

"He's not grumpy—not exactly," said Maud. "He's a very nice, good boy, I'm sure. I was the only passenger coming up just now, so I asked him if he'd seen the view from the Ferris Wheel. 'No, I aint,' he said. 'But you ought to. It's one of the best things,' I told him. A grim sort of smile came on his face, and then he seemed to choke a little.

"So I remembered," went on Maud, "that he was driving a one-horse carriage for a living, and couldn't be making a great deal; for there isn't a word of truth in all the newspaper stories about cab-drivers being extortionate here; and I said, 'Won't you let me treat you to the Ferris Wheel, please? You've driven us so nicely for a whole fortnight!' and I held out a fifty-cent piece."

"And he wouldn't take it?" queried Jack incredulously.

"No; he pushed away the money, and wouldn't look at me for a whole minute or so. Then he said,

'You're very kind, miss, but I couldn't take it.' I told him I was sorry if I'd hurt his feelings ; I didn't mean to. I suppose he drove a whole block before he turned around and said, 'You didn't hurt my feelings, miss ; I beg your pardon. But I haven't been inside the Fair at all.'

"Think of it!" exclaimed Maud, flushing and standing looking out at the sunset with half-formed tears in her gray eyes. "That boy is about fifteen, I should think. He's naturally hungry to see everything and hear everything. He'd been driving visitors up and down, up and down, nearly all day long for almost four months—driving them nearly the whole length of the Plaisance, right along side of its high board fence. Think of that boy—how eager he must be to see all that he's heard of and caught glimpse of ! And he's never been inside the ground once."

"Lots of time yet. I wasn't inside until two weeks ago. Think of it ! think of it !" mimicked Jack, "and lend me twenty dollars, Maud."

Maud seemed as if she did not hear her brother's mockery.

"The poor fellow !" she went on quickly. "All the fascinating sounds and sights he's been condemned to hear from just outside that great boys' paradise ! The bright diadem of the Administration dome shining a quarter of a mile away, and he's never seen the beauty beneath ! He's heard the bawling of those unspeakable

Turks all day, that wooden-nerved Chinaman before the joss-house incessantly inviting, the whang and bang of drums and tom-toms ; he must have seen the heads of the herd of Arab dromedaries swaying in procession ; he has listened day after day and for hours a day to the Mussulman muezzin proclaiming *Allah il Allah* and all the rest, telling that God is great and good——”

“Maud Bruce, star lecturer. Terms, one hundred dollars an evening,” interrupted Jack, in a low tone. But Maud did not seem to hear him.

“The Ferris Wheel revolving before him, a great web of fairy iron by day, and such an enchanting, enormous fire-wheel by night, and he’s never even seen how people get into the cars !” said Maud. “Those lovely ostriches, the Dahomey people, the Eskimos and their skin kayaks, the turrets and towers of the German villages, the distant bands, the cute Japanese—he has heard of them all and has never seen them——”

“Sooner keep his fifty cents,” said Jack.

“Don’t talk nonsense, Jack !” Maud turned on him sharply. “*Mean* nonsense too ! Nobody that had fifty cents to spare could keep it rather than go into the Fair ; you know that perfectly well. The boy has some good reason ; I know he has. He is denying himself for some good purpose ; I’m sure he is, and I’m going to find it out ; see if I don’t. And I’m going to show him that show—laugh away, Jack, but I am ! You’ll see !”

"But Maud, dear," said her aunt, "you can't be expected to pay every poor person's entrance fee. If he won't go in, he won't; that's all there is about it."

"You think so, aunt. Well, my plan is not to fold my hands in this world and comfort my soul with the drug nothing-can-be-done."

"Maud's a rustler!" said Jack emphatically.

"Why, I couldn't go in again—not to see the wonder of the peristyle and great plaza illuminated—not even to see the Russian pictures—nothing. I just couldn't go in and think of that poor boy hungry outside for a sight of what will never be in the world again after a few weeks. I must get him in."

"What are you going to do about it, Maud, if he won't go?" quizzed Jack.

"I'm going to sleep on it," said Maud, "and in the morning I'll have a plan. Good-night, all. Good-night, aunty!"

Next morning there was no Maud at breakfast with us. The young divinity student reported that she had breakfasted at sharp seven. Her sleepy aunt had not heard her leave their "study and two-room" suite. Evidently she was "rustling," as Jack said.

Our first glimpse of her plan was gained from Joe Franks, Adam's younger brother, who was often on the front seat with Adam, and who was accustomed to drive their vehicle when the elder boy went home for dinner, or supper, or an occasional hour's rest. Joe was a

stolider-looking boy than Adam, but still bright enough to remember very clearly anything to which he had listened with interest.

"I'm taking my brother's place all day to-day," Joe explained to our queries. "Adam was hired by a young lady."

"What for?" asked Jack.

"To wheel her in one of them wheeled chairs. She said she was bound to be wheeled all day. Adam didn't want to go—he's kind of cranky, anyhow, afraid somebody'll get him to take charity—but the young lady soon showed him he wasn't sensible."

"What did she say?" I asked.

"Well," says she, "I'm sorry you won't wheel me. I feel as if I know you after your driving me up and down about twice a day for two weeks. And now I'll have to hire a man that I don't know to wheel me, and it will cost me just the same as if you'd push the wheel." "

"And what did your brother have to say to that?" asked Miss Forsyth.

"Well, he says, says he, 'I'd like to wheel you, miss, only I don't understand how it can be that it will cost you just the same.' And says the young lady, 'It's this way. A wheeled chair is twenty-five cents an hour without a guide to wheel it. I can't wheel myself, can I? So I've got to pay a guide if you won't come. The guide will cost me twenty-five cents an

hour. Now I'll pay you the same. I've made up my mind,' she says, 'to be inside from the first thing this morning till the last at night, for once. We get in at eight o'clock say, and we stay till eleven at night. That's fifteen hours; three dollars and seventy-five cents you make, and it doesn't cost me one cent more than if you won't do me the favor. I think you might,' says she. I almost thought she was going to cry," Joe concluded.

We all laughed with delight, seeming to see Maud, slim, eager, beautiful, shrewdly cozening the independent boy into a day of enjoyment; for the work of wheeling her in one of those chairs would be nothing to a big, sturdy fellow like Adam.

"And so he agreed?" said Jack.

"Well, I left him puzzling over it down there at the Fifty-ninth Street entrance," said Joe. "There were some passengers just come in by train wanting to be drove up here, and when I got back the young lady and Adam was gone."

"Have you ever been inside?" I asked.

"Twict," said Joe. "Adam was bound I should; he wouldn't go himself. You see we hire this rig and two horses for change about, and some days we don't make much more'n enough to clear ourselves. Besides, there's my sister; and Adam made up his mind he wouldn't go in at all unless we could get ahead enough for him to take her in. She ain't able to get about alone. We all live with our aunt and we pay her for

the housekeeping. Alice earns her share ; she knits things, and I don't know what all. But she couldn't go in without somebody."

What this meant we did not then discover, for Joe's tale, which I have much condensed in this mere report of occurrences, had occupied us until he delivered us at the Fifty-ninth Street entrance to the Fair.

About half-past twelve o'clock that day our party of five—we were six with Maud—had met by agreement on a bench near the southeast corner of the noble California building. We were about to rise and go in there for lunch on the roof when Maud's clear voice startled us. She was not visible, however. Rising and peering around the corner, we saw her in a two-seated wheeled chair, with Adam Franks beside it. Their backs were toward us. Another girl sat beside Maud, a pale, thin girl, in a woebegone hat.

"Yes, I'm going to lunch with you right here," said Maud decidedly. "I know you have brought plenty for three. I'll just jump out and buy a little fruit ; that will be my share. Wait here till I come back, please."

Out she sprang and away she went into the California building. The eyes of the two she left followed her fondly. We were guilty of listening to their talk during her absence.

"Ain't she just an angel?" said the girl.

"Beats all how smart she is too," said the boy.

"Why, she's showed us more this morning! Seems to know all about everything. And we'll see the illuminations and the boats of all nations going round to-night—and—and everything."

"And to think it doesn't cost a cent for me to be wheeled,—not a cent; your pay for wheeling her more than pays my seat in the double chair."

"It only costs us one dollar for our entrances; I couldn't let her pay that—could I, Alice?"

"Of course you couldn't; and wasn't she nice not going on trying to get you to let her pay for us coming in? Why, we could afford a dollar for coming in, easy. The thing was that I couldn't go round at all except you got me a wheeled chair, and we couldn't afford that, and think of the way she fixed it—so smart—it's really only your time gone for one day—and Joe saves that, him driving; and we're going to see everything right along till the last thing to-night," ended the girl, with a sort of ecstasy.

Dear Maud! We now understood her whole shrewd plan—everything except how she had contrived to get a double-seated chair without a guide, the rule being that only single-seated chairs were hired without guides. In fact, she had privately bargained to pay as much for the chair alone as chair and guide would have cost, but Adam did not know of this proceeding, which was essential to her scheme.

The girl with Maud was certainly Adam's sister, who seemed and, indeed, was a cripple. Later we learned that Adam had balked in the morning after Joe left, balked on the ground that he had vowed to himself he would not see the Fair without his sister.

Upon this Maud had persuaded him to walk with her over the little distance to Fifty-seventh Street where the small house of the orphaned crippled girl and her two brothers stood. Maud had then unfolded her scheme for a double chair, Adam's pay for wheeling her to pay for Alice's seat in the chair. The housekeeping aunt highly approved of the project, and at once set about preparing lunch for two.

So Maud had contrived to save their sense of independence and yet enabled them to see the great show at her expense. A fellow hackdriver had driven the cripple over to the Fifty-ninth Street entrance, and scorned to charge fare. Adam could accept this from a brother whip, because he knew he might repay the favor in kind.

Soon Maud came out of the California building with pears, peaches, candy, and a large bottle of orange sherbet. The others could never have suspected what her share of that lunch cost. She took her seat in the chair. We kept out of sight. Adam wheeled them away and we saw no more of our pretty philanthropist until very late in the evening.

Then she came into her aunt's study, where we were

all awaiting her, and her face, tired though she was, was as the face of the angel in the cathedral east window when the high sun pours as it were the glory of God through it down into the dim aisle.

Jack rose, put his arms around his sister, and kissed her reverently on the brow.

“May God bless you forever, dear ! We know pretty well what you’ve been doing to-day,” and then we related what we had heard and seen. She modestly told us the rest.

The last thing she said that night was a strange thing. I think I still hear it sounding clearly and sweetly along the long and gloomy corridors of the great University Hall :

“I’ve been exceedingly happy to-day—I am now. They were so happy. O God—bless God for doing so much for me !”

DOUR DAVIE'S DRIVE

PINNAGER was on snow-shoes, making a bee-line toward his field of sawlogs dark on the ice of Wolverine River. He crossed shanty roads, trod heaps of brush, forced his way through the tops of felled pines, jumped from little crags into seven feet of snow—Pinnager's men called him "a terror on snow-shoes." They never knew the direction from which he might come—an ignorance which kept them all busy with axe, saw, cant-hook, and horses over the two square miles of forest comprising his "cut."

It was "make or break" with Pinnager. He had contracted to put on the ice all the logs he might make; for every one left in the woods he must pay stumpage and forfeit. Now his axemen had done such wonders that Pinnager's difficulty was to get his logs hauled out.

Teams were scarce that winter. The shanty was eighty miles from any settlement; ordinary teamsters were not eager to work for a small speculative jobber, who might or might not be able to pay in the spring. But Pinnager had some extraordinary teamsters, sons of farmers who neighbored him at home, and who were

sure he would pay them, though he should have to mortgage his land.

The time was late February; seven feet of snow, crusted, on the level; a thaw might turn the whole forest floor to slush; but if the weather should "hold hard" for six weeks longer, Pinnager might make and not break. Yet the chances were heavily against him.

Any jobber so situated would feel vexed on hearing that one of his best teams had suddenly been taken out of his service. Pinnager, crossing a shanty road with the stride of a moose, was hailed by Jamie Stuart with the news:

"Hey, boss, hold on! Davie McAndrews' leg's broke. His load slewed at the side hill—log caught him against a tree."

"Where is he?" shouted Pinnager furiously.

"Carried him to shanty."

"Where are his horses?"

"Stable."

"Tell Aleck Dunbar to go get them out. He must take Davie's place—confound the lad's carelessness!"

"Davie says no; won't let any other man drive his horses."

"He won't? I'll show him!" and Pinnager made a bee-line for his shanty. He was choking with rage, all the more so because he knew that nothing short of breaking Davie McAndrews' neck would break Davie

McAndrews' stubbornness, a reflection that cooled Pinnager before he reached the shanty.

The cook was busy about the caboose fire, getting supper for fifty-three devourers, when Pinnager entered the low door, and made straight for one of the double tier of dingy bunks. There lay a youth of eighteen, with an unusual pallor on his weather-beaten face, and more than the usual sternness about his formidable jaw.

"What's all this, Davie? You sure the leg's broke? I'd 'a thought you old enough to take care."

"You would?" said Davie grimly. "And yourself not old enough to have yon piece of road mended—you that was so often told about it!"

"When you knew it was bad, the more you should take care."

"And that's true, Pinnager. But no use in you and me choppin' words. I'm needing a doctor's hands on me. Can you set a bone?"

"No, I'll not meddle with it. Maybe Jock Scott can; but I'll send you out home. A fine loss I'll be at! Confound it—and me like to break for want of teams!"

"I've thocht o' yer case, Pinnager," said Davie, with a curious judicial air. "It's sore hard for ye; I ken that well. There's me and me feyther's horses gawn off, and you countin' on us. I feel for ye, so I do. But I'll no put you to ony loss in sendin' me out."

"Was you thinking to tough it through here, Davie? No, you'll not chance it. Anyway, the loss would be the same—more, too. Why, if I send out for the doctor, there's a team off for full five days, and the expense of the doctor! Then he mightn't come. Wow, no! it's out you must go."

"What else?" said Davie coolly. "Would I lie here till spring and my leg mendin' into the Lord kens what-like shape? Would I be lettin' ony ither drive the horses my feyther entrustit to my lone? Would I be dependin' on Mr. Pinnager for keep, and me idle? Man, I'd eat the horses' heads off that way; at home they'd be profit to my feyther. So it's me and them that starts at gray the morn's morn."

"Alone!" exclaimed Pinnager.

"Just that, man. What for no?"

"You're light-headed, Davie. A lad with his leg broke can't drive three days."

"Maybe yes and maybe no. I'm for it, onyhow."

"It may snow, it may——"

"Aye, or rain, or thaw, or hail; the Lord's no in the habit o' makin' the weather suit ony but himsel'. But I'm gawn; the cost of a man wi' me would eat the wages ye're owing my feyther."

"I'll lose his team, anyhow," said Pinnager, "and me needing it bad. A driver with you could bring back the horses."

"Nay, my feyther will trust his beasts to nane

but himsel' or his sons. But I'll have yer case in mind, Pinnager ; it's a sore neecessity you're in. I'll ask my feyther to send back the team, and another to the tail of it ; it's like that Tam and Neil will be home by now. And I'll spread word how ye're needin' teams, Pinnager ; it's like your neighbors will send ye in sax or eight spans."

"Man, that's a grand notion, Davie ! But you can't go alone ; it's clean impossible."

"I'm gawn, Pinnager."

"You can't turn out in seven feet of snow when you meet loading. You can't water or feed your horses. There's forty miles the second day, and never a stopping-place ; your horses can't stand it."

"I'm wae for the beasts, Pinnager ; but they'll have no force but to travel dry and hungry if that's set for them."

"You're bound to go ?"

"Div you tak' me for an idjit to be talkin' and no meanin' it ? Off wi' ye, man ! The leg's no exactly a comfort when I'm talkin'."

"Why, Davie, it must be hurting you terrible !" Pinnager had almost forgotten the broken leg, such was Davie's composure.

"It's no exactly a comfort, I said. Get you gone, Pinnager ; your men may be idlin'. Get you gone, and send in Jock Scott, if he's man enough to handle my leg. I'm wearyin' just now for my ain company."

As Davie had made his programme, so it stood. His will was inflexible to protests. Next morning at dawn they set him on a hay-bed in his low, unboxed sleigh. A bag of oats supported his back; his unhurt leg was braced against a piece of plank spiked down. Jock Scott had pulled the broken bones into what he thought their place, and tied that leg up in splints of cedar.

The sleigh was enclosed by stakes, four on each side, all tied together by stout rope. The stake at Davie's right hand was shortened, that he might hang his reins there. His water-bucket was tied to another stake, and his bag of provisions to a third. He was warm in a coon-skin coat, and four pairs of blankets under or over him.

At the last moment Pinnager protested: "I must send a man to drive. It sha'n't cost you a cent, Davie."

"Thank you, kindly, Pinnager," said Davie gravely. "I'll tell that to your credit at the settlement. But ye're needin' all your help, and I'd take shame to worsen your chances. My feyther's horses need no drivin' but my word."

Indeed, they would "gee," "haw," or "whoa" like oxen, and loved his voice. Round-barrelled, deep-breathed, hardy, sure-footed, active, gentle, enduring, brave, and used to the exigencies of "bush roads," they would take him through safely if horses' wit could.

Davie had uttered never a groan after those involuntary ones forced from him when the log, driving his leg against a tree, had made him almost unconscious. But the pain-sweat stood beaded on his face during the torture of carrying him to the sleigh. Not a sound from his lips, though ! They could guess his sufferings from naught but his hard breathing through the nose, that horrible sweat, and the iron set of his jaw. After they had placed him, the duller agony that had kept him awake all night returned ; he smiled grimly, and said, "That's a comfort."

He had eaten and drunk heartily ; he seemed strong still ; but what if his sleigh should turn over at some sidling place of the rude, lonely, and hilly forest road ?

As Davie chirruped to his horses and was off, the men gave him a cheer ; then Pinnager and all went away to labor fit for mighty men, and the swinging of axes and the crashing of huge pines and the tumbling of logs from rollways left them fancy-free to wonder how Davie could ever brace himself to save his broken leg at the *cahots*.

The terrible *cahots*—plunges in snow-roads ! But for them Davie would have suffered little more than in a shanty bunk. The track was mostly two smooth ruts separated by a ridge so high and hard that the sleigh-bottom often slid on it. Horses less sure-footed would have staggered much, and bitten crossly at one another

while trotting in those deep, narrow ruts, but Davie's horses kept their "jog" amiably, tossing their heads with glee to be traveling toward home.

The clink of trace-chains, the clack of harness, the glide of runners on the hard, dry snow, the snorting of the frosty-nosed team, the long whirring of startled grouse—Davie heard only these sounds, and heard them dreamily in the long, smooth flights between *cahots*.

Overhead the pine tops were a dark canopy with little fields of clear blue seen through the rifts of green ; on the forest floor small firs bent under rounding weights of snow which often slid off as if moved by the stir of partridge wings ; the fine tracery of hemlocks stood clean ; and birches snuggled in snow that mingled with their curling rags. Sometimes a breeze eddied downward in the aisles, and then all the undergrowth was a silent commotion of snow, shaken and falling. Davie's eyes noted all things unconsciously ; in spite of his pain he felt the enchantment of the winter woods until—another *cahot* ! he called his team to walk.

Never was one *cahot* without many in succession ; he gripped his stake hard at each, braced his sound leg, and held on, feeling like to die with the horrible thrust of the broken one forward and then back ; yet always his will ordered his desperate senses.

Eleven o'clock ! Davie drew up before the half-breed

Peter Whiteduck's midwood stopping-place, and briefly explained his situation.

"Give my horses a feed," he went on. "There's oats in this bag. I'll no be moved mysel'. Maybe you'll fetch me a tin of tea; I've got my own provisions." So he ate and drank in the zero weather.

"You'll took lil' drink of whiskey," said Peter, with commiseration, as Davie was starting away.

"I don't use it."

"You'll got for need some 'fore you'll see de Widow Green place. Dass twenty-tree mile."

"I will need it, then," said Davie, and was away.

Evening had closed in when the bunch of teamsters awaiting supper at Widow Green's rude inn heard sleigh-bells, and soon a shout outside :

"Come out, some one !"

That was an insolence in the teamsters' code. Come out, indeed ! The Widow Green, bustling about with fried pork, felt outraged. To be called out !—of her own house !—like a dog !—not she !

"Come out here, somebody !" Davie shouted again.

"G' out and break his head one of you," said fighting Moses Frost. "To be shoutin' like a lord !" Moses was too great a personage to go out and wreak vengeance on an unknown.

Narcisse Larocque went—to thrash anybody would be glory for Narcisse, and he felt sure that Moses

would not, in these circumstances, let anybody thrash him.

"What for you shout lak' dat? Call mans hout, hey?" said Narcisse. "I'll got good mind for broke your head, me!"

"Hi, there, men!" Davie ignored Narcisse as he saw figures through the open door. "Some white man come out. My leg's broke."

Oh, then the up-jumping of big men! Moses, striding forth, ruthlessly shoved Narcisse, who lay and cowered with legs up as a dog trying to placate an angry master. Then Moses carried Davie in as gently as if the young stalwart had been a girl baby, and laid him on the widow's one spare bed.

That night Davie slept soundly for four hours, and woke to consciousness that his leg was greatly swollen. He made no moan, but lay in the darkness listening to the heavy breathing of the teamsters on the floor. They could do nothing for him; why should he awaken them? As for pitying himself, Davie could do nothing so fruitless. He fell to plans for getting teams in to Pinnager, for this young Scot's practical mind was horrified at the thought that the man should fail financially when ten horses might give him a fine profit for his winter's work.

Davie was away at dawn, every slight jolt giving his swollen leg pain almost unendurable, as if edges of living bone were griding together and also tearing

cavities in the living flesh ; but he must endure it, and well too, for the teamsters had warned him he must meet "strings of loadin' " this day.

The rule of the long one-tracked road into the wilderness is, of course, that empty outgoing sleighs shall turn out for incoming laden ones. Turn out into seven feet of snow ! Davie trusted that incoming teamsters would handle his floundering horses, and he set his mind to plan how they might save him from tumbling about on his turned-out sleigh.

About nine o'clock, on a winding road, he called, "Whoa !" and his bays stood. A sleigh piled with baled hay confronted him thirty yards distant. Four others followed closely ; the load drawn by the sixth team was hidden by the woodland curve. No teamsters were visible ; they must be walking behind the procession ; and Davie wasted no strength in shouting. On came the laden teams, till the steam of the leaders mingled with the clouds blown by his bays. At that halt angry teamsters, yelling, ran forward and sprang, one by one, up on their loads, the last to grasp reins being the leading driver.

"Turn out, you fool !" he shouted. Then to his comrades behind, "There's a blamed idyit don't know enough to turn out for loading !"

Davie said nothing. It was not till one angry man was at his horses' heads and two more about to tumble his sleigh aside that he spoke ;

"My leg is broke."

"Gah! G'way! A man driving with his leg broke! You're lying! Come, get out and tramp for your horses! It's your back ought to be broke—stoppin' loadin'!"

"My leg is broke," Davie calmly insisted.

"You mean it?"

Davie threw off his blankets.

"Begor, it is broke!" "And him drivin' himself!" "It's a terror!" "Great spunk entirely!" Then the teamsters began planning to clear the way.

That was soon settled by Davie's directions: "Tramp down the crust for my horses; unhitch them; lift my sleigh out on the crust; pass on and set me back on the road."

Half an hour was consumed by the operation—thrice repeated before twelve o'clock. Fortunately Davie came on the last "string" of teams and halted for lunch by the edge of a lake. The teamsters fed and watered his horses, gave him hot tea, and with great admiration saw him start for an afternoon drive of twenty-two miles.

"You'll not likely meet any teams," they said. "The last of the 'loading' that's like to come in soon is with ourselves."

How Davie got down the hills, up the hills, across the rivers and over the lakes of that terrible afternoon he could never rightly tell.

"I'm thinkin' I was light-heided," he said afterward. "The notion was in me somehow that the Lord was lookin' to me to save Pinnager's bits of children. I'd waken out of it at the *cahots*—there was mair than enough. On the smooth my head would be strange-like, and I mind but the hinder end of my horses till the moon was high and me stoppit by McGraw's."

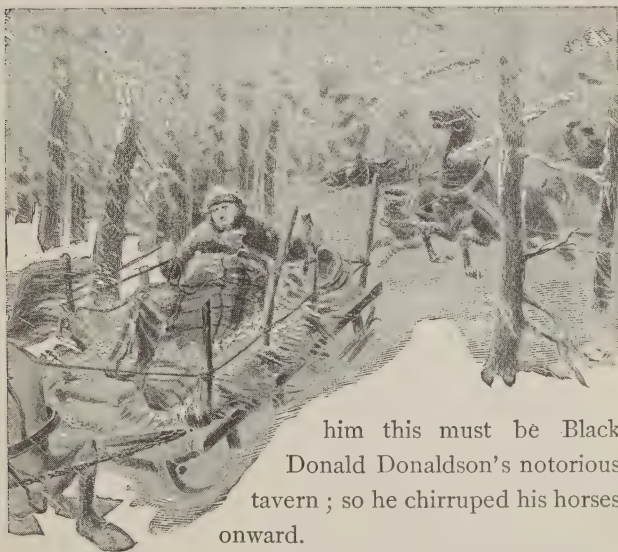
During the night at McGraw's his head was cleared by some hours of sound sleep, and next morning he insisted on traveling, though snow was falling heavily.

"My feyther's place is no more than a bittock ayont twenty-eight miles," he said. "I'll make it by three of the clock, if the Lord's willin', and get the doctor's hands on me. It's my leg I'm thinkin' of savin'. And mind ye, McGraw, you've promised me to send in your team to Pinnager."

Perhaps people who have never risen out of bitter poverty will not understand Davie's keen anxiety about Pinnager and Pinnager's children; but the McAndrews and Pinnagers and all their neighbors of "the Scotch settlement" had won up by the tenacious labor and thrift of many years. Davie remembered well how, in his early boyhood, he had often craved more food and covering. Pinnager and his family should not be thrown back into the gulf of poverty if Davie McAndrews' will could save them.

This day his road lay through a country thinly settled, but he could see few cabins through the driving

storm. The flagging horses trotted steadily, as if aware that the road would become worse the longer they were on it, but about ten o'clock they inclined to stop where Davie could dimly see a log house and a shed with a team and sleigh standing in it. Drunken yells told



him this must be Black Donald Donaldson's notorious tavern ; so he chirruped his horses onward.

Ten minutes later yells and sleigh-bells were following him at a furious pace. Davie turned head and shouted ; still the drunken men shrieked and came on. He looked for a place to turn out—none ! He dared not stop his horses lest the gallopers, now close behind him, should be over him and his low sleigh. Now his team broke into a run at the noises, but the fresh

horses behind sped faster. The men were hidden from Davie by their crazed horses. He could not rise to appeal; he could not turn to daunt the horses with his whip; their fronthoofs, rising high, were soon within twenty feet of him. Did his horses slacken, the others would be on top of him, kicking and tumbling.

The *cahots* were numerous; his yells for a halt became so much like screams of agony that he took shame of them, shut his mouth firmly, and knew not what to do. Then suddenly his horses swerved into the cross-road to the Scotch settlement, while the drunkards galloped away on the main road, still lashing and yelling. Davie does not know to this day who the men were.

Five hours later David McAndrews, the elder, kept at home by the snowstorm, heard bells in his lane, and looked curiously out of the sitting-room window.

"Losh, Janet!" he said, most deliberately. "I wasna expeekin' Davie; here he's back wi' the bays."

He did not hurry out to meet his fourth son, for he is a man who hates the appearance of haste; but his wife did, and came rushing back through the kitchen.

"It's Davie himsel'! He's back wi' his leg broke! He's come a' the way by his lone!"

"Hoot-toot, woman! Ye're daft!"

"I'm no daft; come and see yoursel'. Wae's me, my Davie's like to die! Me daft, indeed! Ye'll need to send Neil straight awa' to the village for Doctor Aberdeen."

And so dour Davie's long drive was past. While his brother carried him in, his will was occupied with the torture, but he had scarcely been laid on his bed when he said, very respectfully—but faintly—to his father :

“You'll be sendin' Neil oot for the doctor, sir? Aye; then I'd be thankfu' if you'd give Aleck leave to tak' the grays and warn the settlement that Pinnager's needin' teams sorely. He's like to make or break; if he gets sax or eight spans in time he's a made man.”

That was enough for the men of the Scotch settlement. Pinnager got all the help he needed; and yet he is far from as rich to-day as Davie McAndrews, the great Brazeau River lumberman, who walks a little lame of his left leg.

PETHERICK'S PERIL

EACH story of the Shelton Cotton Factory is fifteen feet between floors ; there are seven such over the basement, and this rises six feet above the ground. The brick walls narrow to eight inches as they ascend, and form a parapet rising above the roof. One of the time-keepers of the factory, Jack Hardy, a young man about my own age, often runs along the brickwork, the practice giving him a singular delight that has seemed to increase with his proficiency in it. Having been a clerk in the works from the beginning, I have frequently used the parapet for a footpath, and although there was a sheer fall of one hundred feet to the ground, have done it with ease and without dizziness. Occasionally Hardy and I have run races, on the opposite walls, an exercise in which he invariably beats me, because I become timid with increase of pace.

Hopelessly distanced last Wednesday, while the men were off at noon, I gave up midway, and looking down, observed the upturned face of an old man gazing at me with parted lips, wide eyes, and an expression of horror so startling that I involuntarily stepped down to the bricklayer's platform inside. I then saw that the ap-

parently frightened spectator was Mr. Petherick, who had been for some weeks paymaster and factotum for the contractors.

"What's the matter, Petherick?" I called down. He made no answer, but walking off rapidly, disappeared round the mill. Curious about his demeanor, I descended, and after some little seeking found him smoking alone.

"You quite frightened me just now, Petherick," said I. "Did you think I was a ghost?"

"Not just that," he replied sententiously.

"Did you expect me to fall, then?" I inquired.

"Not just that, either," said he. The old man was clearly disinclined to talk, and apparently much agitated. I began to joke him about his lugubrious expression, when the one o'clock bell rang, and he shuffled off hastily to another quarter.

Though I puzzled awhile over the incident, it soon passed so entirely from my mind that I was surprised when, passing Petherick in the afternoon, and intending to go aloft, he said, as I went by:

"Don't do it again, Mr. Frazer!"

"What?" I stopped.

"That!" he retorted.

"Oh! You mean running on the wall," said I.

"I mean going on it at all!" he exclaimed. His earnestness was so marked that I conceived a strong interest in its cause.

“I'll make a bargain with you, Mr. Petherick. If you tell me why you advise me, I'll give the thing up!”

“Done!” said he. “Come to my cottage this evening, and I'll tell you a strange adventure of my own, though perhaps you'll only laugh that it's the reason why it sickens me to see you fooling up there.”

Petherick was ready to talk when Jack and I sat down on his doorsteps that evening, and immediately launched into the following narrative :

I was born and grew to manhood near the highest cliffs of the Polydd coast. Millions of sea-fowls make their nests along the face of those wave-worn precipices. My companions and I used to get much excitement, and sometimes a good deal of pocket money, by taking their eggs. One of us, placing his feet in a loop at the end of a rope and taking a good grip with his hands, would be lowered by the others to the nest. When he had his basket full they'd haul him up and another would go down.

Well, one afternoon I thus went dangling off. They paid out about a hundred feet of rope before I touched the ledge and let go.

You must know that most of the cliffs along that coast overhang the water. At many points one could drop six hundred feet into the sea, and then be forty or fifty feet from the base of the rock he left. The

coast is scooped under by the waves, and in some places the cliff wall is as though it had been eaten away by seas once running in on higher levels. There will be an overhanging coping, then—some hundred feet down—a ledge sticking out farther than that of the top; under that ledge all will be scooped away. In some places there are three or four such ledges, each projecting farther than those above.

These ledges used to fall away occasionally, as they do yet, I am told, for the ocean is gradually devouring that coast. Where they did not project farther than the upper coping, the egg-gatherer would swing like a pendulum on the rope, and get on the rock, if not too far in, then put a rock on the loop to hold it till his return. When a ledge did project so that one could drop straight on it, he hauled down some slack and left the rope hanging. Did the wind never blow it off? Seldom, and never out of reach.

Well, the ledge I reached was like this. It was some ten feet wide; it stuck out maybe six feet farther than the cliff top; the rock wall went up pretty near perpendicular, till near the coping at the ground, but below the ledge, the cliff's face was so scooped away that the sea, five hundred feet below, ran in under it nigh fifty feet.

As I went down, thousands of birds rose from the jagged places of the precipice, circling around me with harsh screams. Soon touching the ledge, I stepped from the loop, and drawing down a little slack, walked

off briskly. For fully a quarter of a mile the ledge ran along the cliff's face almost as level and even in width as that sidewalk. I remember fancying that it sloped outward more than usual, but instantly dismissed the notion, though Gaffer Pentreath, the oldest man in that countryside, used to tell us that we should not get the use of that ledge always. It had been as steady in our time as in his grandfather's, and we only laughed at his prophecies. Yet the place of an old filled fissure was marked by a line of grass, by tufts of weeds and small bushes, stretching almost as far as the ledge itself, and within a foot or so of the cliff's face.

Eggs were not so many as usual, and I went a long piece from my rope before turning back. Then I noticed the very strange conduct of the hosts of sea-fowls below. Usually there were hundreds, but now there were millions on the wing, and instead of darting forth in playful motions, they seemed to be wildly excited, screaming shrilly, rushing out as in terror, and returning in masses as though to alight, only to wheel in dread and keep the air in vast clouds.

The weather was beautiful, the sea like glass. At no great distance were two large brigs and, nearer, a small yacht lay becalmed, heaving on the long billows. I could look down her cabin stairway almost, and it seemed scarcely more than a long leap to her deck.

Puzzled by the singular conduct of the sea-birds, I soon stopped and set my back against the cliff, to rest

while watching them. The day was deadly still and very warm.

I remember taking off my cap and wiping the sweat from my face and forehead with my sleeve. While doing this, I looked down involuntarily to the fissure at my feet. Instantly my blood almost froze with horror! There was a distinct crack between the inner edge of the fissure and the hard-packed, root-threaded soil with which it was filled! Forcibly I pressed back, and in a flash looked along the ledge. The fissure was widening under my eyes, the rock before me seemed sinking outward, and with a shudder and a groan and roar, the whole long platform fell crashing to the sea below! I stood on a margin of rock scarce a foot wide, at my back a perpendicular cliff, and, five hundred feet below, the ocean, now almost hidden by the vast concourse of wheeling and affrighted birds.

Can you believe that my first sensation was one of relief? I stood safe! Even a feeling of interest held me for some moments. Almost coolly I observed a long and mighty wave roll out from beneath. It went forth with a high, curling crest—a solid wall of water! It struck the yacht stern on, plunged down on her deck, smashed through her swell of sail, and swept her out of sight forever.

Not till then did my thoughts dwell entirely on my own position; not till then did I comprehend its hope-

lessness ! Now my eyes closed convulsively, to shut out the abyss down which my glance had fallen ; shuddering, I pressed hard against the solid wall at my back ; an appalling cold slowly crept through me. My reason struggled against a wild desire to leap ; all the demons of despair whispered me to make an instant end. In imagination I *had* leaped ! I felt the swooning helplessness of falling and the cold, upward rush of air !

Still I pressed hard back against the wall of rock, and though nearly faint from terror, never forgot for an instant the death at my feet, nor the utter danger of the slightest motion. How long this weakness lasted I know not ; I only know that the unspeakable horror of that first period has come to me in waking dreams many and many a day since ; that I have long nights of that deadly fear ; that to think of the past is to stand again on that narrow foothold ; and to look around on the earth is often to cry out with joy that it widens away from my feet.

(The old man paused long. Glancing sidewise at Jack, I saw that his face was pallid. I myself had shuddered and grown cold, so strongly had my imagination realized the awful experience that Petherick described. At length he resumed his story :)

Suddenly these words flashed to my brain : “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

Fear not, therefore ; ye are of more value than many sparrows." My faculties were so strained that I seemed to hear the words. Indeed, often yet I think that I did truly hear a voice utter them very near me.

Instantly hope arose, consciously desperate indeed ; but I became calm, resourceful, capable, and felt unaccountably aided. Careful not to look down, I opened my eyes and gazed far away over the bright sea. The rippled billows told that a light outward breeze had sprung up. Slowly, and somewhat more distant, the two brigs moved toward the horizon. Turning my head, I could trace the narrow stone of my footing to where my rope dangled, perhaps three hundred yards distant.

It seemed to hang within easy reach of the cliff's face, and instantly I resolved and as instantly proceeded to work toward it. No time remained for hesitation. Night was coming on. I reasoned that my comrades thought me killed. They had probably gone to view the new condition of the precipice from a lower station, and on their return would haul up and carry off the rope. I made a move toward it. Try to think of that journey !

Shuffling sidewise very carefully, I had not made five yards before I knew that I could not continue to look out over that abyss without glancing down, and that I could not glance down without losing my senses. You have the brick line to keep eyes on as you walk along the factory wall ; do you think you could move

along it erect, looking down as you would have to? Yet it is only one hundred feet high. Imagine five more such walls on top of that and you trying to move sidewise—incapable of closing your eyes, forced to look down, from end to end, yes, three times farther! Imagine you've got to go on or jump off! Would you not, in an ecstasy of nervous agitation, fall to your knees, get down face first at full length, clutch by your hands, and with your shut eyes feel your way? I longed to lie down and hold, but of course that was impossible.

The fact that there was a wall at my back made it worse! The cliff seemed to press outward against me. It did, in fact, incline very slightly outward. It seemed to be thrusting me off. Oh, the horror of that sensation! Your toes on the edge of a precipice, and the implacable, calm mountain apparently weighting you slowly forward.

(Beads of sweat poured out over his white face at the horror he had called before him. Wiping his lips nervously with the back of his hand, and looking askant, as at the narrow pathway, he paused long. I saw its cruel edge and the dark gleams of its abysmal water.)

I knew that with my back to the wall I could never reach the rope. I could not face toward it and step forward, so narrow was the ledge. Motion was perhaps barely possible that way, but the breadth of my



“ . . . my heels on the very edge ”—*p. 180.*

shoulders would have forced me to lean somewhat more outward, and this I dared not and could not do. Also, to see a solid surface before me became an irresistible desire. I resolved to try to turn round before resuming the desperate journey. To do this I had to nerve myself for one steady look at my footing.

In the depths below the myriad sea-fowl then rested on the black water, which, though swelling more with the rising wind, had yet an unbroken surface at some little distance from the precipice, while farther out it had begun to jump to whitecaps, and in beneath me, where I could not see, it dashed and churned with a faint, pervading roar that I could barely distinguish. Before the descending sun a heavy bank of cloud had risen. The ocean's surface bore that appearance of intense and angry gloom that often heralds a storm, but, save the deep murmur going out from far below my perch, all to my hearing was deadly still.

Cautiously I swung my right foot before the other and carefully edged around. For an instant as my shoulder rubbed up against the rock, I felt that I must fall. I did stagger, in fact, but the next moment stood firm, face to the beetling cliff, my heels on the very edge, and the new sensation of the abyss behind me no less horrible than that from which I had with such difficulty escaped. I stood quaking. A delirious horror thrilled every nerve. The skin about my ears and neck, suddenly cold, shrank convulsively.

Wild with fear, I thrust forward my head against the rock and rested in agony. A whirl and wind of sudden wings made me conscious of outward things again. Then a mad eagerness to climb swept away other feeling, and my hands attempted in vain to clutch the rock. Not daring to cast my head backward, I drew it tortoise-like between my raised shoulders, and chin against the precipice, gazed upward with straining of vision from under my eyebrows.

Far above me the dead wall stretched. Sidewise glances gave me glimpses of the projecting summit coping. There was no hope in that direction. But the distraction of scanning the cliff-side had given my nerves some relief; to my memory again returned the promise of the Almighty and the consciousness of his regard. Once more my muscles became firm-strung.

A cautious step sidewise made me know how much I had gained in ease and security of motion by the change of front. I made progress that seemed almost rapid for some rods, and even had exultation in my quick approach to the rope. Hence came freedom to think how I should act on reaching it, and speculation as to how soon my comrades would haul me up.

Then the idea rushed through me that they might even yet draw it away too soon, that while almost in my clutch it might rise from my hands. Instantly all the terrors of my position returned with tenfold force ;

an outward thrust of the precipice seemed to grow distinct, my trembling hands told me that it moved bodily toward me; the descent behind me took an unspeakable remoteness, and from the utmost depth of that sheer air seemed to ascend steadily a deadly and a chilling wind. But I think I did not stop for an instant. Instead a delirium to move faster possessed me, and with quick, sidelong steps—my following foot striking hard against that before—sometimes on the point of stumbling, stretched out like the crucified, I pressed in mortal terror along.

Every possible accident and delay was presented to my excited brain. What if the ledge should narrow suddenly to nothing? Now I believed that my heels were unsupported in air, and I moved along on tip-toe. Now I was convinced that the narrow pathway sloped outward, that this slope had become so distinct, so increasingly distinct, that I might at any moment slip off into the void. But dominating every consideration of possible disaster was still that of the need for speed, and distinct amid all other terrors was that sensation of the dead wall ever silently and inexorably pressing me outward.

My mouth and throat were choked with dryness, my convulsive lips parched and arid; much I longed to press them against the cold, moist stone. But I never stopped. Faster, faster, more wildly I stepped—in a delirium I pushed along. Then suddenly before my

staring eyes was a well-remembered edge of mossy stone, and I knew that the rope should be directly behind me. Was it?

I glanced over my left shoulder. The rope was not to be seen! Wildly I looked over the other—no rope! Almighty God! and hast thou deserted me?

But what! Yes, it moves, it sways in sight! it disappears—to return again to view! There was the rope directly at my back, swinging in the now strong breeze with a motion that had carried it away from my first hurried glances. With the relief tears pressed to my eyes and, face bowed to the precipice, almost forgetful for a little time of the hungry air beneath, I offered deep thanks to my God for the deliverance that seemed so near.

(The old man's lips continued to move, but no sound came from them. We waited silent while, with closed eyes and bent head, he remained absorbed in the recollection of that strange minute of devoutness. It was some moments before he spoke again:)

I stood there for what now seems a space of hours, perhaps half a minute in reality. Then all the chances still to be run crowded upon me. To turn around had been an attempt almost desperate before, and certainly, most certainly, the ledge was no wider where I now stood. Was the rope within reach? I feared not. Would it sway toward me? I could hope for that.

But could I grasp it should I be saved? Would

it not yield to my hand, coming slowly down as I pulled, unrolling from a coil above, trailing over the ground at the top, running fast as its end approached the edge, falling suddenly at last? Or was it fastened to the accustomed stake? Was any comrade near who would summon aid at my signal? If not, and if I grasped it, and if it held, how long should I swing in the wind that now bore the freshness and tremors of an imminent gale?

Again fear took hold of me, and as a desperate man I prepared to turn my face once more to the vast expanse of water and the nothing beyond that awful cliff. Closing my eyes, I writhed around with I know not what motions till again my back pressed the cliff. That was a restful sensation. And now for the decision of my fate! I looked at the rope. Not for a moment could I fancy it within my reach! Its sidewise swayings were not, as I had expected, even slightly inward—indeed when it fell back against the wind it swung outward as though the air were eddying from the wall.

Now at last I gazed down steadily. Would a leap be certain death? The water was of immense depth below. But what chance of striking it feet or head first? What chance of preserving consciousness in the descent? No, the leap would be death; that at least was clear.

Again I turned to the rope. I was now perfectly desperate, but steady, nerved beyond the best moments

of my life, good for an effort surpassing the human. Still the rope swayed as before, and its motion was very regular. I saw that I could touch it at any point of its gyration by a strong leap.

But could I grasp it? What use if it were not firmly secured above? But all time for hesitation had gone by. I knew too well that strength was mine but for a moment, and that in the next reaction of weakness I should drop from the wall like a dead fly. Bracing myself, I watched the rope steadily for one round, and as it returned against the wind, jumped straight out over the heaving Atlantic.

By God's aid I reached, touched, clutched, held the strong line. And it held! Not absolutely. Once, twice, and again, it gave, gave, with jerks that tried my arms. I knew these indicated but tightening. Then it held firm and I swung turning in the air, secure above the waves that beat below.

To slide down and place my feet in the loop was the instinctive work of a moment. Fortunately it was of dimensions to admit my body barely. I slipped it over my thighs up to my armpits just as the dreaded reaction of weakness came. Then I lost consciousness.

When I awakened my dear mother's face was beside my pillow, and she told me that I had been tossing for a fortnight in brain fever. Many weeks I lay there, and when I got strong found that I had left my nerve on that awful cliff-side. Never since have I been able

to look from a height or see any other human being on one without shuddering.

So now you know the story, Mr. Frazer, and have had your last walk on the factory wall.

He spoke truer than he knew. His story has given me such horrible nightmares ever since that I could no more walk on the high brickwork than along that narrow ledge of the distant Polydd coast.

